
Subject: The Call Goes Out

Posted by [TheBossLady](#) on Mon, 02 Jul 2012 22:34:55 GMT

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International Rescue has been in operation for three years. In those three years, many lives have been saved. But as time has gone on, more and more of the world have come to rely on the dedicated men of International Rescue. Jeff Tracy, commander of the group, has come to realize that for his dream to survive and thrive, more equipment has to be designed and built. And with this need comes a need for new personnel. And so, the call goes out...

Post by Tikatu on 17/05/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out

Posted by [TheBossLady](#) on Wed, 04 Jul 2012 01:52:26 GMT

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Date: Friday, January 13, 2068, Time: 2:23 p.m., Place: Tracy Island in the South Pacific

"Base to Thunderbird 5. What's the situation?" Jeff Tracy looked over at the bank of portraits lining the wall of his lounge, the heart of International Rescue. Several of them were live feed pictures of his progeny, out doing what they did best, rescuing those with no hope. This time it was a Chinese sightseeing submarine, entangled in the tall kelp farm beds that ringed Japan and followed the northeastern coast of Russia. ~Why can't these people listen to the warning buoys?~ he groused internally. His eyes traveled along the portraits until they rested on a blond space monitor.

"Thunderbird 5 to Base," John Tracy replied, his handsome face looking a bit harried.

"Thunderbird 4 reports at least two more trips to remove the passengers. Thunderbird 2 is preparing the heavy-duty grabs to extricate the sub from the kelp bed. Operatives Ess and Ay are still cutting away at the kelp; that stuff is tough! Thunderbird 7 hasn't reported in; I think Doc's in the surgery."

"See if you can raise Thunderbird 7, Thunderbird 5," Jeff his son. "R and D is concerned about the new hoverjets and how they are working there on the sea's surface." He looked over at the "Brains" of International Rescue, who sat on one of the lounge sofas with his PDA. The bespectacled scientist looked over at his employer and nodded once.

"FAB, Base," John replied, switching one of his communications banks over to a different frequency. He looked at the grid that tracked the locator signals of each member of the rescue team. ~Hmm, Di's signal has moved a bit. Wonder what's going on? Time to ask.~

"Thunderbird 5 to Thunderbird 7, what's your status?"

In the mini-surgery of Thunderbird 7, International Rescue's mobile hospital, Dr. Dianne Tracy was busy repairing a gash suffered by a crewmember of the stricken sub. She carefully used skin glue to bring together the edges of the gash and hold them. Then she pulled out a small, very diffused laser to seal the edges. The glue would dissolve harmlessly from the wound and the scarring

would be less noticeable than if she had used the old, traditional stitches.

John's query caught her in the middle of the procedure. She kept her hands steady and her eye on her work as she responded tersely into her hands-free ear bud/microphone combination. "Thunderbird 7 to Thunderbird 5, I'm a bit busy here sealing up somebody's leg, Jay. What do you need?"

"A status report, Thunderbird 7," John replied to his stepmother. "R and D is concerned about the function of the new hoverjets. And I notice that your locator has moved at least a dozen meters from your original position."

"Thunderbird 7 status report. I have eight patients in varying degrees of triage, the worst being a case of blunt force trauma causing a level three concussion." The leg was finished, and after bandaging it, Dianne shucked her bloodied gloves, then brought an antigravity stretcher up to the level of the surgery's scanner bed. She got on the side of it closest to the door between the surgery and the main medical cabin. Reaching across, she grabbed the blanket beneath her latest patient and pulled hard, sliding the woman across to the stretcher.

"Oomph. The hover jets seem to be working fine; I'm not underwater that I can discern. As for the locator, Thunderbird 7 is on station keeping, but the waves or the wind seem to have pushed it out of position. Please remind base that although I can walk and chew gum at the same time, I cannot treat patients and pilot simultaneously."

Dianne moved the stretcher into the main cabin, and settled the woman onto one of the diagnostic beds. She cleaned her hands with antibacterial/viral gel, checked her concussion patient, who was still unconscious, looked at the monitoring panels for a couple of other people, then strode forward to the pilot's cabin. Flicking a switch, she watched the screens that were connected to the beds in the cabin behind her come to life. Sitting in the pilot's seat, she took the hovercraft off of station keeping. "Thunderbird 7 to Thunderbird 5. I am now moving back to my original position." The physician looked out the windshield of the pilot's cabin and stifled a groan. "Thunderbird 7 to Thunderbird 5. Thunderbird 4 has just surfaced."

A voice came through the speakers of the cabin. "Thunderbird 4 to Thunderbird 7. Doc, I've got another patient for you."

"FAB, Thunderbird 4." Dianne pressed the switches that resumed the station-keeping program, and then went back to the main cabin to open the doors for her newest patient. "Thunderbird 7 to Thunderbird 5. My patient count is about to go up by one. Do you or base need any more information?"

"Negative, Thunderbird 7. I will relay your status report to base." John's voice showed his sympathy with his hardworking stepmother.

"FAB, Thunderbird 5, and thanks," Dianne said, her own tone moderating in gratitude. Then she moved to help Gordon Tracy bring the latest victim of the sub rescue aboard her vessel.

In Thunderbird 2, Tin-Tin, wearing a blue IR uniform with a bright fuchsia sash, waited by the winches for Virgil's signal. She was tired; they all were, and she was having trouble focusing on what she was doing right then. Her mind swirled instead with the computations and chemical equations she had been working on lately. It was a pretty puzzle; merging the lightweight fabric of Penelon with the bullet-stopping Kevlar. She had been working on it to the exclusion of all other work and it was weighing on her mind. She knew she had the answer, but it stayed tantalizingly out of reach.

Yet, when this 'all hands on deck' rescue came up, she put on her new uniform and took the passenger elevator to Thunderbird 2, just like Gordon and... Alan. She pushed him out of her mind. That was one mess she didn't need cluttering up her thought processes.

They had all been surprised when Dianne and Scott joined them, his face a thundercloud.

"Father said that I'm of more use diving with Gordon than sitting on the shore in Mobile Control," Scott growled as he strapped himself in.

"And Thunderbird 7 has been tucked away in the pod so I can test those new hoverjets," Dianne had chimed in. "Besides, there are some serious injuries according to John..."

Tin-Tin's mind snapped back to the present when she heard Virgil's voice in her ear. "You with me, Tee?"

She sighed. "FAB, Vee. I'm here."

"Ready on the winch, Tee. Ess and Ay will be giving us the go ahead any minute now."

"FAB. Ready when they are."

She adjusted the sash, which fell uncomfortably across her chest. ~It's times like this that I envy Di, her scrubs....~

Beneath the waves, Scott and Alan were using their hand-held laser cutters on the tough kelp. Alan's arms were getting tired and sore from reaching and stretching. He heard Scott's voice in his ear.

"Ay? How's your air doing?"

Alan checked the digital readout in the corner of his full-face mask. "I'm good for another 15, Ess."

"FAB. Just hope we can get this stuff off of here soon. My arms are killing me!"

Post by Tikatu on 24/05/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [TheBossLady](#) on Wed, 04 Jul 2012 01:59:02 GMT

In International Rescue's space station, John returned to his conversation with Jeff. "Thunderbird 5 to base."

"Base here, Thunderbird 5. Report."

John relayed Dianne's report to his father. Jeff snorted at his wife's comment about walking and chewing gum at the same time. Brains listened intently to what John had to say, especially about the station-keeping problem. He took notes in his PDA. When John was finished and had signed off, Brains sighed and faced Jeff.

"I think you are right, Mr. Tracy. We do need more personnel. The workload has increased as we get more and more calls. We needed all hands for the rescue today so we couldn't even send out Thunderbird 1."

"Yes, Brains," Jeff sat back in his chair, steepling his fingers. "It's time for some new blood. We were lucky with Dianne. Dianne didn't know she would become CMO of IR when she took on the position of family physician. She's enabled us to save more lives on the field as well as allow you to focus solely on your engineering. But we've got to find the right kinds of people to help us now. The right pilots, astronauts, aquanauts, engineers, what have you. We can't just cast out a net and take in anybody. I want to work from personal referrals and have all candidates cleared by our security."

Brains nodded. "Our latest security upgrade was very successful. Outsourcing security for Tracy Industries was a wise idea. And as part of that, International Rescue has benefited from their new ideas and designs. The security office will help us screen any candidates we may find to help out IR." He pulled out his PDA. "Where do you want to start, Mr. Tracy?"

"An astronaut, I think. That would free up John and Alan for rescues. John can get in touch with his NASA contacts while I look into the WSA, but if we can hire from in-house at Tracy Industries, that would be great. The personnel would already be screened."

Brains spoke up. "Dianne could definitely use some help as well. You heard her comment. She has a point. A nurse or EMT would be helpful not only in IR but here in the sickroom as well."

"True, she was run ragged during that last round of flu. Add a nurse or EMT to the top of the list, Brains." Brains made notes with his stylus.

"And, tell me, Brains, could you and Tin-Tin use some help in maintaining the Thunderbirds and the auxiliary equipment? Lady Penelope has a mechanic that she thinks would be up to the challenge."

Brains tapped his stylus on his chin. "Possibly, Mr. Tracy. I know that we could use a mechanic to work on the family fleet of planes and boats. If he could also pick up some of the responsibilities with the auxiliary equipment, that would be helpful. As for the Thunderbirds, we'll see how things go once we get Thunderbird Eight online."

Jeff nodded. "Once Eight is on line, we'll need another aquanaut as well. And this rescue really

shows us the need for more pilots, too." He made a couple of notes on a computer padd. "I'll start networking with some of my friends from my Air Force days about pilots, and have Scott do the same. Gordon will have to contact his old commander for me so we can see if there's an aquanaut there for us. Again, I want to hire from in house wherever possible for security reasons. Maybe I'll give Dianne's uncle, Andrew Carmichael, another call. He did well by us in bringing Dianne to my attention." Jeff grinned. "Did well by me in more ways than one."

Jeff looked at his vidphone. "I'll speak to our security firm about some new 'needs' for Tracy Industries. Needs that are actually need for IR. Come to think of it, could you and Tin-Tin use some help in the engineering end of things? I know that you've got a lot on your plate with Thunderbird Eight's design and construction."

"Possibly. Though the mechanic may lighten things up for us. Tin-Tin's had more time to devote to R and D since... the break up."

Jeff shook his head. "Alan is an idiot for breaking things off with Tin-Tin. But it's probably better for her that he did."

"Yes. She's been working almost non-stop on that blend of Penelon and Kevlar. She thinks she's close to a breakthrough."

Jeff nodded, "It would be good for our people to have a uniform that's both lightweight and virtually bullet-proof. In a different, more versatile design as well." He sighed. "Another thing for Tin-Tin to work on."

Brains looked at this PDA. "This is a big step we're taking, Mr. Tracy, bringing in this many people in such a short time. I just hope things don't backfire on us."

"So do I, Brains. So do I," Jeff replied as he sipped his coffee and listened to the talkback from the still unfinished rescue.

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [TheBossLady](#) on Wed, 04 Jul 2012 02:00:12 GMT
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Time: 9:45 p.m.

The weary rescuers came up from Thunderbird 2's hangar, Scott's arm in a sling and wrapped solidly with a bandage. A sharp piece of kelp had sliced his arm from elbow to wrist and he had ended up being one of his stepmother's patients.

"Welcome home," said Jeff, who waited at the monorail's terminus. "Debriefing in the dining room over supper in 25 minutes." He watched as his tired sons and a drooping Tin-Tin shuffled by on the way to their suites. His wife, equally exhausted, stopped and he put an arm around her.

"The boys are in bed. Cherry is still up; she has a report due tomorrow that she's putting the

finishing touches on." Jeff informed her. "Mother has offered to do the schooling tomorrow morning and let you sleep in if you like."

"That's nice of her," Dianne said, leaning on his shoulder, as he guided her to their master suite. He stood outside the shower while she cleansed the sweat and blood from her body. He picked up her filthy scrubs and put them in a hamper for recycling. When she came from the shower, he had a lounging outfit waiting for her. She smiled, and lifted her face for a kiss before donning her clothes.

"Hungry?" he asked.

"Yes, but only for food this time, I'm afraid. I am bone weary."

They walked to the dining room hand in hand and he held out her chair for her. Some of the boys were already there, including Brains. Tin-Tin came in and Virgil pulled out her chair. Kyrano and Grandma Tracy were already putting the warm dishes on the table and the food was being passed around. Gordon helped Scott dish food onto his plate. As his family ate, Jeff asked questions about the rescue and each person recounted their part in it. Brains also asked questions, especially about Thunderbird 7's performance.

"Ten injured, one with a severe concussion. Two fatalities."

Dianne ended up her portion of the debriefing somberly. The room was quiet after that. Death of any kind bothered them all, but especially when they lost someone they had worked so hard to save.

They had just about finished the meal when the emergency signal went off. Virgil groaned, then sighed. "Well, it is Friday the thirteenth," he muttered.

Jeff had immediately gotten up and made his way upstairs to the lounge. He pressed the button that opened up communications with John in Thunderbird 5.

"Base to Thunderbird 5. What do you have for us, John?"

John smiled wearily at his father. "A Space Cruiser is having trouble on re-entry. Cape Canaveral has asked us to assist getting her down safely."

Jeff spoke to Virgil. "Take pod 3 with the fire fighting equipment and a full load of dicetyline; it may be needed dirtside." He turned to Alan. "Get Thunderbird Three into space. Take..." He looked around to see that Scott, who could be counted on to pilot the space ship, was injured, leaving just Gordon and... Tin-Tin. Then his gaze fell on the engineer.

"Take Brains, Alan. Virgil, you take Gordon. Tin-Tin, are you checked out on Thunderbird 1?"

Scott stepped forward, "Dad, I...."

Jeff cut him off. "You're injured. And grounded until that injury heals." He turned to the young Malaysian again. "Tin-Tin?"

"Yes, sir. I am." There was no mistaking the hint of excitement in Tin-Tin's voice.

"Then you take Thunderbird 1 and set up Mobile Control."

"FAB!" she said eagerly, taking what was usually Scott's place between the light sconces. Virgil was already gone.

Jeff sat behind his desk. He scrubbed his face wearily and looked at the remaining occupants of the lounge, his oldest son and his wife.

"Thunderbirds are go."

Post by Tikatu on 24/05/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [TheBossLady](#) on Wed, 04 Jul 2012 02:10:06 GMT
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Date: January 20, 2068

It had been a week since International Rescue saved two astronauts from certain death at Cape Canaveral, Florida. However, something strange was happening to the plant life around the landing strip. The World Space Agency called in astronaut and environmental engineer Callie Spencer to investigate the matter. Leaving a shift at the International Space Station, she thought about the situation.

"According to Colonel Seese, there's been a dramatic change in nitrogen levels within the plants."

When her ride landed safely on Earth, she exited the spacecraft and was immediately greeted by Colonel Michael Seese. "Professor Spencer, welcome back to Earth."

"Thank you, sir." She saluted him and shook his hand. "I've read the report you sent to me at the Space Station. The nitrogen increase could cause the plants to mutate."

"Which is why I asked you to come here to Cape Canaveral. As an environmental engineer, your background makes you most qualified to look into this matter."

"I'll get on it immediately, sir. I'll start by collecting samples."

"The best place to collect samples is within a two-mile radius around the landing strip."

"Thanks, sir. I'll also be collecting samples of areas not affected to compare notes."

Callie wasted no time in collecting a dozen samples from around the area. She went to the laboratory and started working on solving the mystery of the rapidly growing plants.

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Wed, 18 Jul 2012 00:54:54 GMT
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Sitting in the water was the prototype of the newest hydrofoil to be built by Tracy Industries. It was designed to be a new foray into the marine vehicle market and a few more tests were needed before production could begin.

A young man sat in the cockpit of the boat, anticipating the start of the test. His alert brown eyes were checking the gauges, making sure that all was in order. As he was doing so, he felt an increase in his heart rate.

"This is it," he thought as the word was given to start the test run. He started the engine, allowing it to idle for a few seconds before throttling the engine up to speed. 125 knots...130 knots. As the boat's speed increased so did the exhilaration he felt. He continued to push the boat's speed up. 175 knots...past 200. This is wonderful. Everything is going as planned. He started to nudge the throttle to 220 knots when he sensed a vibration in the boat, originating from the steering yoke.

Damn, I thought we had the problem licked. He quickly throttled down the boat to a reasonable speed and returned to the dock.

On the shore, two people watched the proceedings with keen interest, one taking notes.

"This young man has possibilities. We'll have to check his credentials and present our findings to the boss."

"I agree," said the second person, a petite blonde. "He seems to meet all the requirements."

A couple of days later a man sat at his desk, looking over the file, and what he saw made him smile.

"Brandon James McCain, age 30, ten years in WASP. Achieved the position of Dive Master in a short length of time." The man continued to read the file. "Hmm, his former commander, John Shore, has nothing but good things to say about him." After he finished reading the file, he came to a decision. "I think it's time I let the boss know that I've found another candidate for him."

Post by MagicMaster8 on 25/05/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Wed, 18 Jul 2012 00:55:23 GMT
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In a private area of Terminal 5 of Heathrow Airport, a woman sat in a plush room.

She looked around and took in her surroundings. She had been working for Tracy Industries for a few years now, but had not known that they maintained a private lounge for executives.

She sipped at her drink, turning the page of her magazine. Her plane would be arriving soon to take her to Prague for a meeting with a possible new supplier of fire resistant materials.

"Miss Martin?" a soft but very masculine voice woke her from her reverie.

She looked up to see a handsome man in a pristine Tracy Industries pilots uniform smiling at her.

"I'm Christopher Jordan", he said, holding out his hand. "I'll be your pilot for this journey."

Kelly Martin shook the hand offered to her, "Thank you Christopher."

"I've placed your luggage in the hold ready for take-off", Christopher continued, "and the jet is ready to go, if you'd like to follow me please."

Christopher led Kelly to the small TI corporate jet, and helped her to get aboard.

Within half an hour, the plane was airborne. Christopher activated the auto-pilot and headed into the passenger area of the plane.

"Would you like some refreshment Miss Martin?" he asked.

"Yes please", Kelly smiled, "could I have a coffee please?"

"Certainly", Christopher said with a wide smile as he went into the galley at the rear of the jet.

Kelly smiled to herself as she pulled her laptop from her bag. Opening it up, she activated the message system.

Turning on the built-in camera, she looked around.

"Memo to Jeff Tracy", she said with a smile, "I've found another candidate for you."

Post by TheWrongTrousers on 25/05/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out

Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Wed, 18 Jul 2012 00:56:28 GMT

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Matt Hawkins, businessman extraordinaire, sipped his coffee and read over the memo once more. One of his aides had given him some interesting information: Jeff Tracy was looking for private medical staff. He set the cup down on the hardwood desk and rubbed his chin, thinking. This is something Dominic's interested in. I remember he mentioned it before. A pang of guilt passed through his chest as it always did when he thought of his estranged first-born son. Lord knows I've

never been there for the boy before, but I could point Jeff in his direction. Dak is more than qualified for this job.

Memories and regrets filled Matt's mind as he mused over the situations. He had left Dominic's mother six months after the birth - they had never planned to be together anyway; they weren't even in love! At least, that was the stance Matt had kept for twenty-seven years. But after the death of Roisin Kelly, Dominic's mother, the guilt had slowly crept in, and one day Matt had found himself reaching out across the Atlantic for the son he never knew.

Dominic had immigrated to America from his homeland of Ireland, and Matt was pleased that he had settled in with his half brother Tom in Kansas, close to where Matt himself lived. But the boy was restless, and was always looking for a new adventure. This was something that Matt could not understand, considering Dominic had a child of his own to think about.

He shook his head and finished off his coffee, and found his fingers moving towards the videophone's key-in panel.

"Barney, have you got the latest on this D. Kelly person?"

"Right here, Steve."

"Looks promising, doesn't he? He could be what the boss is looking for. Plus, he came highly recommended by one of Tracy Industries' biggest business partners, the CO of Hawkins Aerospace."

"Yeah. Dominic Aidan Kelly, age twenty-seven, BSc Diploma in Nursing Science. Good credentials, just like all the others. But he's got an edge over the rest of the candidates, doesn't he?"

"Uh huh. Is a member of LifeFlight - Mr Tracy will like that; he's a real philanthropist, I've heard. Qualified pilot; flies helijets. Over 3,000 hours of flight time."

"Impressive. He's a surgical nurse; I wonder if that's what Mr Tracy is looking for?"

"Who knows? He's a nurse, that's all we were asked to look for."

"There's one thing that might go against him, though; he's a single father. That's a lot of responsibility."

"Yeah, but you never know what the boss will think about things like this. So, we're forwarding this one on, then?"

"Definitely. Let's get to it."

Post by ArtisticRainey on 25/05/2004

Date: Monday, January 30, 2068; Time: 8:15 a.m.; Place: Tracy Island

"Wow!"

Tyler Tracy gaped at the large cargo VTOLs that were coming in, one after another, all bearing the Tracy Industries logo on their sides. At that moment there were three sitting on the airstrip, one whole one that he could see from his vantage point on the Villa patio, another, half obscured by the rock face that stood between him and the airstrip, and another hidden completely from his view. As he watched, the hidden VTOL moved up and away from the Island, heading out towards the sea, and the one that was half hidden became wholly so. The one that was fully presented to his view now became truncated, and another one, which had been hovering and waiting for landing clearance settled down into the spot furthest from the rock face.

"Dad! Dad!" Tyler ran inside, his 9-year-old face a study in wonder and panic as he burst into the study. Several men, most wearing hard hats and uniforms bearing the logo of Tracy Industries' construction division, turned to look at the boy. Standing behind a desk strewn with plans and papers, was Tyler's adoptive father Jeff, who also glanced up at his son and said mildly, "Tyler, what's the rule about busting in here unannounced?"

Tyler immediately slowed himself, calmed himself, and replied, "Knock before entering, sir."

"You're right. Please remember it for next time. But since you're already in the room, what can I help you with?"

"Uh, nothing, Dad. I just wanted to tell you about all the VTOLs that were landing on the air strip."

Jeff's mouth twitched into a quirky grin. "As you can see, Ty, I'm well aware of those craft and the supplies and men that they carry. And to cool your curiosity, they are here to make renovations to the Cliff House. We are going to create small apartments in the existing space. Now, you'd better run along, son. School starts in..." Jeff looked at his watch. "... five minutes."

"Yes, sir." Tyler turned to leave.

"Oh, and Ty?"

"Yes, Dad?"

"The Cliff House is off-limits to you, Cherry, and Alex until further notice."

Tyler hung his head. He and his closest age siblings liked to play on the patio area there, except when whatever they were playing with went over the side. It was a long way down.

"Yes, sir."

The men in the room chuckled at Tyler's hangdog look as he left the room through the study,

closing the ornate grille door quietly behind him. He headed for the schoolroom, on the same level but down the corridor a bit, and opened that door just as quietly. His mother, who also acted as his primary on-site teacher, looked up at him.

"Better sit down, Ty. Ms. Ellison is ready to start your English lesson."

Tyler sat down in front of one of the plasma screen computers and put in his earbuds, one with a microphone and one without. He booted the machine up, verbally commanding the computer to connect him with his satellite fourth grade class and soon he saw the smiling face and the dark cornrows of Ms. Abby Ellison, his teacher. It was still early in the school year, but so far he had had nothing to complain about with Ms. Ellison.

"G'day, Tyler. I hope you've had a good morning. Let's get started, shall we?"

Post by Tikatu on 26/05/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out

Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Wed, 18 Jul 2012 00:58:04 GMT

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Nicole was just completing the final checks on a new patient, when a colleague of hers entered the room.

"Do you know, they are still doing evaluations on us in that that office." She lowered her voice so as to not wake the patient. "They've been in there a long time. What if they find something bad with us?"

Nicole shook her head, turned to her friend and smiled. "Evie stop worrying. They're not going to find anything bad with us, unless there is something you need to tell me." She placed the patients chart back into its holder on the edge of the bed. "The reason why it is taking so long is because there are a lot of personnel on this ward."

They both proceeded to walk out of the room. On the way to the nurse's station, Nicole bumped into a large nosed man dressed in uniform.

"Sorry." she picked up his hat and handed it to him.

"H'it's perfectly alright. T'was my fault." He brushed off his chauffeur's cap. "Would it be possible h'if you could tell me where I would find Dr Lierman's office?"

"Sure." Nicole broke off at the sound of an approaching siren of an ambulance. "Evie could you take this gentleman to Dr. Lierman's office? I'll take this next patient."

"Ok Nikki," Evie answered and ushered the man towards the lift.

XXXX

Lady Penelope closed the last folder and handed it to Dr Lierman.

"I am impressed by your nursing staff, Michael. The reports on them are fascinating. From what I have read, they are efficient and hard working."

Dr Lierman received the folder and filed it away. "I am pleased that you approve of my nurses Lady Penelope and thank you for your praises and kind comments. As a matter of fact, I was most surprised when you called."

"Well as I said before, as soon as a friend of mine informed me of an opening in his company for a new nurse and asked me for a recommendation, I immediately thought of you and your staff. It would be a good opportunity for one of them." Lady Penelope answered coolly.

"Well, I thank you my dear Penelope, for thinking of me. When will I hear of your friends decision?"

"As soon as I have more news of the situation, you'll be the first to know. But I would like you to keep this quiet. I would not like to get your nurses get their hopes up and then have them disappointed if they don't get the job."

They were interrupted by a knock on the door. The good doctor got up to answer it as he answered Lady Penelope. "Don't worry about it. I'll keep this news to myself." He opened the door to Parker.

Lady Penelope stood up and walked towards the door, after seeing Parker. "I'm afraid, Michael, that I must go. There are many things that I still have to do before the day is over."

"I understand, Penelope." He reached for her hand and kissed it gently. "It was nice to see you again. Hopefully not too much time will pass before we see each other."

"Indeed, I hope not. I'll speak to you as soon as I have more news. Goodbye Michael."

"Goodbye Lady Penelope." He watched her until the lift doors closed in front of her.

Parker turned to his employer, "Success, M'lady?"

"Success, Parker. It was a close call between 5 nurses at the most. But I believe I have found a candidate for Jeff. I must inform him as soon as I get into the Rolls."

"Yes M'lady," Parker answered.

Post by Nikki-browneyes1 on 26/05/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Wed, 18 Jul 2012 00:59:46 GMT
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Monday 30th January. 10.17am. Tracy Island.

Crack. Crack crack. Crack. Crack.

Alan Tracy looked with narrowed eyes at his brother as Gordon rubbed one hand over his knuckles. He pressed down, and once again, a series of resounding cracks emanated from the joints.

"Gordon! Would you please stop that? It's disgusting."

Gordon smiled, seemingly apologetically, and dropped his hands.

"Sorry Al."

Alan 'harrumphed' and went back to his magazine. He was enjoying the morning sun, reading by the pool in relative silence, only the sounds of nature and the slow lapping of distant waves disturbing the quiet.

Crack crack crack. Crack.

Or at least, he was enjoying it. He looked over and glared as Gordon continued to crack - his toes, this time, Alan noted with a frown. Crack. Crack crack.

"Gordon!"

"Sorry Alan." The reply came in a singsong tone.

Alan rolled his eyes and went back to his magazine. Maybe it was a good thing he was trading off with John, soon. Gordon was driving him insane, these days, and of course, it would give he and Tin-Tin some space. That would be a good thing. He knew she had taken it hard, but it was for the best...

"I think it's a good thing."

Alan's head snapped around and he frowned.

"What?" He said tersely. He checked his tone at Gordon's incredulous glance. "What?" He repeated in a calmer tone.

"I said I think it's a good thing we're getting new members of the team." Alan nodded; glad to know that Gordon hadn't suddenly become a mind reader. "These days, rescues are getting bigger, tougher. We need more people."

"Definitely. I hope we can find the people we need."

"Hmm."

They fell into companionable silence for a while; Alan went back to his magazine, absorbed in an article on the newest driver to hit the Parola Sands circuit.

Crack, crack crack crack, CRACK!

"Gordon!"

Thwack.

"Ouch."

Alan retrieved his magazine and flopped back into the chair, a slight smile touching his lips.

Post by ArtisticRainey on 27/05/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Wed, 18 Jul 2012 01:00:42 GMT
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Chicago O'Hare Airport, January 30th 2068

If one more small, perfect snowflake landed on the window, she was going to scream. The world's busiest airport for over 100 years was at a standstill. Chicago, in the dead of winter, was not a place Elise Collins had wanted to spend the night.

Sighing, she started away from the window back towards her seat when she heard the terminal page advising her to proceed to the nearest courtesy videophone for an important call. She closed her eyes, counting to ten before she moved. Elise knew who the call would be from. Her Boss...her VERY upset Boss. Another bawling out from him was the last thing she needed. Didn't the man understand that 'grounded' meant ALL aircraft and not just a select few?

"...Yes Sir, I know that...but...Mr. Lyle, if..."

"Don't give me excuses Collins, Do you have any idea how important these clients are? They need to be in Los Angeles by 10.00am! YOU are supposed to be in Phoenix picking them up! I pay you to fly! Not to sit around and watch the weather!"

She needn't have bothered to try to continue the conversation because Mr. Lyle of Lyle Corporate Jets had disconnected the call. Obviously he wasn't going to listen to anything she had to say. Her flight plan had been to fly from Denver to Chicago, change aircraft and then proceed to Phoenix to collect two very influential Japanese businessmen and fly them to Los Angeles where they would catch an International Flight to Japan.

This was her job. After 9 years in the USAF, she'd become a corporate pilot, certified on Jets, SST's and helijets. At first, it was all that she had dreamed, until Mr. Lyle took over the company his Father had built. The Son was now flying it into the ground.

Elise made her way downstairs from the chaos in the main terminal, to the corporate, and private jet Flight Plan Center. It was busy with pilots and controllers who were trying to keep up with the

weather and flight plans. Flopping down on the nearest sofa, Elise sighed and rubbing her now throbbing head, mumbled, "I have got to get another job."

"Well, if you're serious about that, I have some info you may find interesting." came the reply from the pilot sitting across from her.

"Yes! I am. I've had it up to here." she stated, emphasizing the fact with her hand.

"Well, I heard on the grapevine that Tracy Industries is looking for a few good pilots."

This caught her attention. "Really? Tracy Industries? Are you sure?"

"Yep. Thinking of applying myself actually." Elise watched the man as he got up to refill his coffee. Sitting back, she rustled through her tired brain and came up with one word that could change her dire job situation.

"Scott."

Post by FrankieCTB2 on 29/05/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Wed, 18 Jul 2012 01:03:01 GMT
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Monday 30th January. 12.30pm. Thunderbird Five.

John Tracy sat back and watched the M.W.A.N. news broadcast he had been monitoring, making a few amendments on his electronic notepad. Not only did he have to answer any emergency calls that came in for International Rescue, but he also had to keep an ear out for situations that could possibly escalate into a life-or-death situation for some unfortunate person. Around him, the monitoring equipment of the high-tech space station hummed, and the circulated air floated lazily about him.

John rolled his eyes as an article on world politics came up - 'What a joke.' - but the newsreader finally got to the story he was waiting for.

"Today the search finally came to an end for missing teenagers Gerard Fennel. The seventeen-year-old from Topeka, Kansas, went missing from his home three days ago. He was found gagged and tied up in an abandoned cabin deep within a forest twenty miles away from the city. The authorities are in no doubt that this was a kidnap, and looking for clues as to the kidnapper's whereabouts.

Gerard was found by LifeFlight volunteer Dominic Kelly, who was part of the team that were called in to assist in the search both in the air and on the ground. Earlier, M.W.A.N. reporter Gavin Belle got this exclusive interview."

John leaned in, pulling blond hair from his eyes, and listened closely as a young, dark-haired and

pale-skinned man appeared on the monitor. When he spoke, John recognised his accent as Irish. 'That's odd...'

"LifeFlight were called in to search for Gerard as we are a search and rescue organisation. He was found tied up, and as such had severe abrasions to his wrists. There was evidence that he had been punched and kicked several times. We flew him to hospital immediately, and we all agree that if he hadn't been found within the next few hours, he likely would not have survived."

John made a few more amendments to his notepad and sat back again. He was very glad to stroke the disappearance of the young man off his list. It would never have been a case for IR, but it had been in his native Kansas, and it would have been a tragedy if he had been found too late.

He changed the channel to another news broadcast as the MWAN one finished. LifeFlight did good work, he mused. He flicked to another screen in his notepad, and began taking notes once more.

Post by ArtisticRainey on 29/05/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Wed, 18 Jul 2012 01:06:26 GMT
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Date: Tuesday, January 31; Time: 10:45 a.m., Place: Tracy Island

Jeff rubbed his temples. He was going over the glowing reports he had sitting before him from his agents all over the world.

How do I pick the right ones? How do I pick the most dedicated, the most trustworthy?

He took up Penelope's report on her mechanic. Kat Williamson? Where have I heard that name before? Oh yes! The New Year's Eve party! Such a tiny thing to be working with such heavy machinery, but if Penny has faith in her.... I'll let Penny know that we'll make arrangements for Kat to come out and see the Island and such.

The problem is with all of our new recruits is that I don't really feel I can tell them about International Rescue until they get here, until I can be sure of them. Still, I don't want a repeat of what happened with Dianne either. It took almost two months to regain her trust after she found out about IR.

He pushed the memory away, but it resurfaced, along with the method he had used to recruit the woman became Tracy family physician, Chief Medical Officer of International Rescue, and eventually, his second wife.

Flashback: January 2066

Jeff Tracy took a deep breath and prepared to dial a phone number he knew well.

I can't believe that we've finally come to this. Finally come to the day that we have to go outside the family for personnel, for help.

He looked over at the pictures of his boys, all in their International Rescue uniforms. Over the past three years portraits of Brains, wearing his own uniform, and of Tin-Tin in her blue coverall, had been added to the line up. His eye lingered on his two engineers, especially on Brains.

He's been such a huge help, such a great resource. But he and Tin-Tin can only do so much. If we can lift some of the burden from him....

He dialed the number.

We'll start with the medical end of things....

"Hello. Andy?" Jeff asked of the graying gentleman who now faced him in the vid phone's screen.

"Jeff! It's been a while! How are you? How are the boys? How about your mother?" Dr. Andrew Carmichael greeted his old friend with pleasure.

"We are doing just fine. The boys are healthy and well, and Mother is, well, herself." Jeff answered with a grin. "How's Maggie? Are the girls doing well?"

"Oh, Maggie is as beautiful and vivacious as ever, Jeff. And Regina just made me a grandfather again!" Dr. Carmichael replied. Then he looked sharply at Jeff. "To what do I owe the pleasure of this call?"

"Well, I have a favor to ask of you. I'm heading to New York tomorrow and I'm going to stop in L.A. overnight. I'd like to discuss something with you over dinner. Are you free?" Jeff asked.

"Business or pleasure, Jeff? Do I bring Maggie or not?" Dr. Carmichael responded.

"Business, I'm afraid, Andy. Though on my way back from New York I'd like have dinner with both of you. See pictures of that new grandchild." Jeff chuckled.

Dr. Carmichael checked his PDA. "Okay, Jeff. I'm free. Dinner tomorrow night for business. And then later for pleasure. Anything I need to bring with me?"

"Yes, Andy. I'm looking for a new family physician. Brains' engineering workload has increased to the point that I want to take the medical end of things off his plate." Jeff said.

"Okay, Jeff. What exactly are you looking for in a doctor?" Dr. Carmichael took a stylus and picked up his PDA.

"I need someone with degrees and certification in either family medicine or emergency medicine. They have to have at least a private pilot's license and have a medical license through Doctors Without Borders. They have to be fairly fit; I don't want any old codgers, Andy." Jeff enumerated his desires. "I'd prefer them to speak English as a first language, and be unencumbered by family,

if possible."

Dr. Carmichael nodded as he put down the qualifications that Jeff had ticked off. "Okay, Jeff. I'll have some names for you when we meet." He looked up at the vid phone again. "Looking forward to seeing you again, you old fox."

Jeff laughed, "Same here, Andy. I'll see you tomorrow night. Till then, goodbye." Jeff cut off the call. He leaned back in his chair, lacing his fingers behind his head. Step one taken.

Dr. Carmichael sat at the reserved table at Reign's, his briefcase by his side, waiting for his friend to show up. He looked up to see the ruggedly handsome features and trim figure of Jeff Tracy striding toward him. He rose with a smile and held out his hand.

"Jeff, it's good to see you! You're looking great!" Dr. Carmichael said as they sat down. A waiter came up and told them about the evening's specials and took their drink orders.

"You're not looking too bad yourself, Andy. I see you're keeping busy between your position at Mercy General and your seat on the board at Doctors Without Borders," Jeff said, grinning. The drinks came quickly and Jeff sipped at his scotch.

"Yes, I'm a busy guy, Jeff. But your call intrigued me. You've never needed anybody beyond Brains before. Is he okay?" Andrew asked with a concerned frown.

Jeff sighed. "Yes, Brains is fine. It's just that he wears so many hats around our place and I think it's beginning to be too much for him. So I'm looking to take the medical responsibilities off of him. With your connections through DWB, I'm turning to you for the perfect doctor."

The waiter took their orders for meals. A light jazz band started playing in the background. Andrew opened his briefcase.

"I have four names for you. I'll admit, none of them have all of the qualifications you're looking for, but I'll go over each of them with you."

"First, I have Dr. Akshay Singh. He's from Calcutta, he's a Sikh, and he holds a degree and certification in family medicine. He's licensed in India and, of course, through DWB. English is not his first language, although he does speak it. He doesn't have a pilot's license and he's on the pudgy side. He doesn't have a wife and kids, if that's what you mean by family." Andrew handed over the data card to Jeff. He slipped it in his PDA.

"Next is Dr. Ian Sinclair, from Great Britain, mainly Scotland. English is his first language, obviously. He's fit. No pilot's license. Certified in emergency medicine and licensed in Great Britain and through DWB. He has two partners, male and female; last I heard they were looking for a place to marry." Again, a data card was put in Jeff's hands.

"Here is Dr. Andrea Walken. She's from Utah, a Mormon, and is certified in family medicine. She's licensed in Utah and through DWB. She's fit, has a private pilot's license and right now is on her

two-year missionary service in Chile. She's due back in about 10 months. She's also engaged to marry a fellow Mormon, a widower with six children, when she returns. Strangely enough, German is her first language but she speaks excellent English." Jeff took the data card and looked at it.

Andrew held the last card and sighed. Jeff looked over at him.

"What's the matter, Andy?" he asked.

Andrew took a sip of his cognac, and looked over the data card in his own PDA. His brown eyes met Jeff's blue ones squarely.

"I hesitated to bring this one along. She's got most of the qualifications you've asked for but there's a complication." Andrew paused. "She's my niece."

He looked down at the card and then up at Jeff again. "I want you to realize that if she didn't have the things you were looking for, I wouldn't even mention her name. I am not given to nepotism."

Jeff nodded. "I understand. Tell me the details."

Andrew opened the file. "Dr. Dianne Koch. From South Carolina. Degrees in both family medicine and emergency medicine. Certified in both. Licenses in South Carolina and through DBW. Has a private pilot's license. Is fit, and is a widow with three school-aged children." Andrew looked up. "Oh, and English, with a pronounced southern drawl, is her first language."

Jeff snorted a laugh and put out his hand for the card. The waiter arrived with their meals, and the two men made small talk over the food.

As they were preparing to leave, Andrew shook Jeff's hand again. "Let me know who you decide on, Jeff, no matter who it is."

"I'll do that, Andy. See you and Maggie in a few days." Jeff said as they walked out together, Jeff slipping into a hover limo pulled up to the curb, and Andrew giving his ticket to the valet. Andrew watched as the limo pulled away into traffic.

Jeff looked over the data cards he had, putting each into his PDA to see the readouts on each candidate. I'll hand these over to our security so they can do the background checks. Then we'll see who is left.

Post by Tikatu on 31/05/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Wed, 18 Jul 2012 01:09:49 GMT
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The flashback continues....

Little by little, the candidates were whittled down. Dr. Singh, though eminently qualified, lived with and cared for his elderly parents, who, Jeff discovered, didn't take kindly to the thought of being uprooted. One of Ian Sinclair's partners was a tabloid reporter. Boy, he would find the story of the century if he moved to the Island. I just can't take that risk.

Dr. Walken had become Dr. Walken-Petrie while in Chile. She had married a businessman who was based in Chile and was being threatened with excommunication from the Mormon faith because she had left her mission. Jeff wondered what her former fiancé thought of her defection.

"I hope there are no complications with Andy's niece, even though she's got three kids," Jeff muttered.

Surprisingly, there were none. Andy had warned his niece that she would hear from Jeff and she was willing to interview and to visit the Island to meet the rest of the family. Jeff had been impressed with her self-assurance and her sense of humor about the situation. She was willing to uproot the children, under the assurance that a satellite education program would be provided. Her mother was not best pleased, Jeff heard later on, but since there she had a brother in the area to deal with their mother, Dianne felt she could safely take the job as Tracy family physician.

"My uncle has been telling me for years now that I should move on. The memories that I have of my late husband are still occasionally painful. It's time for a fresh start," she had confided. Jeff understood.

Dianne and her kids had been on the Island for three weeks. Things had been going smoothly, it seemed. Dianne had insisted on baseline physicals for everyone, and had requested records from a number of physicians that the Tracys had used over the years. Grandma Tracy had given her the most trouble, not liking the fact that a woman was poking and prodding her son and grandsons! Never mind that this woman was asking Emily Clark Tracy to show her parts of herself that hadn't been seen by anybody but her old family doctor back in Kansas since her husband died!

Tin-Tin, on the other hand, had been very relieved that her new physician was a woman; she had some questions about birth control that she hadn't felt comfortable asking anyone else. Jeff himself had found her thorough, professional, but with a calming "bedside manner" that put him at ease. Gordon reported that she had a good sense of humor, even putting up with his nearly constant "What's up, Doc?" whenever he saw her. The family worked together to keep her from discovering the truth about IR until Jeff had a better feel for her trustworthiness, partially by housing her and her kids in the Round House, and by keeping her busy in upgrading the sick room, which had been sorely neglected in Brains' lab upgrades.

But one night, a rescue went terribly wrong, and John was brought back home with a badly wounded leg. Tin-Tin ran all the way down to the Round House, hauling Dianne up to the sick room and thrusting her in amongst three young men all dressed in blue uniforms and colored sashes. The fourth lay on a gurney, being attended by Brains. She took one look at John's leg, swallowed her questions, and banished the boys from the sick room.

Brains later reported how focused she was, yet how gentle with John. She asked him questions

about how it happened, getting as much clarification as she could from him before she put him under. Brains assisted her as she probed the wound, removing minute splinters of metal and wood, repairing muscle and sinew and blood vessels in a meticulous operation, then finally, carefully, closing up the leg with surgical glue. "We may have to open it up again later," she told Brains. "I hope not, but..."

After making sure John had an IV of antibiotics to fight infection and of saline fluid and blood to replace the liquid he had lost, Brains reported Dianne had fingered the lavender sash, then clenched it in one fist and shot out of the room, bloody scrubs and all.

Her destination was the lounge, where an anxious Jeff was wrapping things up with Alan while waiting for word on John's injury. She strode directly over to Jeff, her face thunderous, and shook the sash in his face.

"What the hell is this!? Why didn't you tell me!? Here I am, uprootin' mah kids and hauling them halfway across the world to work for a man that Ah am told is an honest, honorable one, and now Ah find out that he's been keepin' a secret from me! A very big secret! A secret that might have influenced mah decision to come here! A secret that might endanger mah kids! And how do Ah find out? Does the big man tell me? No, Ah have to find out by accident! When Ah'm called upon to use mah skills unexpectedly! What the hell were you thinking, Mistah Tracy?!"

Her drawl had come more pronounced as her tirade continued, and her face grew red and Alan could have sworn her eyes actually flashed. Jeff stood there stoically and took it. When she paused for breath, he jumped in and said, "Are you finished? Good. How's John?"

She blinked, breathing heavily, and then she huffed out a breath and said, "No, Ah'm not finished. Not by a long shot. John is restin' comfortably. Ah've done all Ah can for his leg. I'll know its condition better when the swelling goes down." Alan noticed her accent became less pronounced as she calmed down. Or seemed to. Alan could tell that although she was no longer shouting at his father, she was a long, long way from being calm.

The following eight weeks were hell for Jeff. At first, Dianne was angry with everyone for deceiving her and concealing the family's secret. Everyone but John, to whom she showed a calm and gentle bedside manner. Brains had reported that it was like a switch was thrown when she walked into the infirmary where John rested. The smouldering anger that showed in her very walk disappeared and the caring doctor was revealed.

Part of her frustration with the situation, as Jeff was to find, was the fact that she really couldn't talk to anyone about it. She didn't want to betray International Rescue by venting to any of her friends or family. Even though the family, (meaning Jeff) didn't trust her enough with the secret from the start, she was determined not to lose what trust she might have gained by the situation. She and Jeff had several sessions where they butted heads, one in particular about the issue of trust.

"Three weeks wasn't enough time to tell what kind of person I was? Wasn't it enough time to know whether or not I'd be trustworthy? You trusted my uncle's opinion enough to approach me about this job. Do you think he'd steer you to someone who would betray your organization?"

"I had just begun to see the type of person you were, Doctor, and given another week or so, I would have told you about International Rescue. And though I trust your uncle's opinion on medical matters, I couldn't take a chance with any candidate knowing the secret about the 'family business'. Your uncle doesn't even know about it. He was giving me names of people who would be good doctors, not people who I could be open and honest with about this secret."

Her anger at the rest of the family faded as they got back into a routine and as John's leg healed and he began physical therapy. She did insist that her children be told the secret, and they were, only to find that little Tyler had seen Thunderbird One take off from the pool one night when he was supposed to be asleep.

"I thought it was a dream, so I didn't say anything...."

Her anger at Jeff, however, stayed hot, and her manner towards him remained cool until finally Kyrano took matters into his own hands. He cornered Dianne one evening after dinner and steered her down to the garden, where he offered a listening ear and let her vent.

"Doctor, if you are so angry at Mr. Tracy for his duplicity, why do you stay?"

"I've thought about leaving, Kyrano, but then, where do I go? Home? What do I tell everyone? I got fired? Life on a lush tropical island didn't agree with me? I hate lying, Kyrano. And I would be so tempted to tell everyone the truth. I can talk to my mother from here and keep my mouth shut, but face to face with her asking me questions about why I left this job... no, I can't risk it."

"Then what will put things right between you?"

Dianne told him.

Post by Tikatu on 31/05/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Wed, 18 Jul 2012 01:10:53 GMT
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"An apology?" Jeff asked loudly, amazed. "An admission that I was wrong? What if I wasn't wrong, Kyrano?"

"Mr. Tracy, you must admit that keeping International Rescue a secret from her for as long as you did was impolite at the least," Kyrano said quietly. "This is something that affects not only her own work here, but also the lives of her children. And it is that which upsets her the most."

"If she had known about it from the start, would she still have come?" Jeff asked his retainer.

"I believe she would have, Mr. Tracy. And with excitement, knowing that she was aiding the worlds greatest rescue organization. Now, she is disillusioned, not so much with International Rescue as she is with you as a person. Her uncle had painted a picture of an honest man. She

feels you weren't honest with her."

"I know. She's told me. More than once."

"Then apologize for that, if nothing else."

And so Jeff attempted to apologize. He summoned Dianne to his office and sat behind his desk while she stood before him.

"Doctor, I want to apologize for not being honest with you."

She stood there silently, looking at him. He fidgeted in his seat. Then she turned to leave.

"Wait."

She stopped.

"Aren't you going to accept my apology?"

She turned back to him.

"What apology? You said you wanted to apologize. But Ah didn't hear 'Ah'm sorry'. And it would have been insincere anyway. Look at you. Sittin' behind your desk. Hidin' behind it is more like it." She turned to go again. "When you're ready to apologize sincerely, you know where to find me."

Jeff felt his face flush with anger. How dare she! Walk away from me, judging my apology as insincere! But even so, a small part of him agreed with her. You were doing this to regain the peace, it said, not because you sincerely believe you were wrong.

The angry part of him thought, But I wasn't wrong....

The small niggling voice returned, You were wrong to let it go on as long as you did. Face it, Tracy; you saw early on that she was a trustworthy person. She's a doctor and used to keeping confidences. Now, if you want more than "keeping the peace", you know what you have to do.

He got up from behind his desk and ran across the room. Just as she began to mount the steps to the study, he grabbed her by a wrist and turned her around.

"Doctor!"

She gazed at him coolly, one eyebrow raised. He looked down, then took a deep breath and met her gaze.

"I am sorry, truly sorry, for not being honest with you about International Rescue. I used our security and secrecy as an excuse to lie to you about it, and I drew my whole family into the deception. I may have been justified in doing that for a little while, until I took your measure, but I did it for far longer than was necessary. Please accept my sincere apologies for lying to you for so long."

Dianne regarded him coolly for a moment more, and then smiled.

"I accept your apology, Mr. Tracy." She glanced down at her hand, where Jeff still had a firm grip on her wrist. He followed her gaze and hurriedly let go of her.

"I'm sorry, I forgot I had grabbed...."

She held up a hand to stop him, and then used that hand to massage her wrist.

"You have quite a grip there, Mr. Tracy."

He chuckled and she smiled again. Then she turned to leave.

"Uh, Doctor?"

"Yes, Mr. Tracy?"

He held out his hand. "Friends?"

She turned again and looked him in the eye. Jeff swore he could see the twinkle in it as she glanced down briefly at his hand.

"I wouldn't go that far, Mr. Tracy." Then she turned and was gone.

Jeff watched her go, then turned back to his desk. He felt better, as if the air had been cleared between them. And he realized that friendship, if it was meant to be, would come along in its own time.

Flashback ended.

A warm pair of arms wrapped around Jeff from behind and a warm pair of lips nuzzled his ear. He turned and those lips met his in a sweet kiss. He turned and made room for her on one knee.

"Busy, dearest?"

"Yes. Trying to discover which of these candidates will be trustworthy, which will be the best fit for IR. I do not want a repeat of our rocky start."

"Heavens, no!"

"So, love, how do I pick the most trustworthy? The best fit? Any ideas?"

Dianne sighed, looking over his data padds. "I think you've got to focus on what you need first. Pick that one, and then go on to the next. All these are clamoring for your attention, I know, but we need to go slowly about bringing in our new people. We're going to have to trust in their recommendations in some instances." She straightened up, scootching her behind around on his leg in ways that made him feel warm, and picked up a pad. "Now, here's that astronaut and

chemical engineer you were looking at: Callie Spencer."

"Yes," Jeff said, pulling the clipboard over so they both could look at it. "She's been working on a flora problem at Canaveral after the wake of our last rescue there. We used dicetyline and it seems to have had an effect on the surrounding plant life. Brains is certain that the dicetyline isn't the problem. We have an agent on the scene who is trying to frustrate the Professor's efforts until Brains and Tin-Tin can determine what the real problem is." Jeff chuckled. "She must be getting pretty hot under the collar by now."

"Then maybe it's time to alleviate the woman's frustration and clue her in to what's going on," Dianne suggested.

"Let me talk with Brains and see how close he is to an answer. Then we can go from there." Jeff activated his watch, and called on his chief engineer for a progress report.

Later that day, an email arrived in the secure mailbox of one of Callie Spencer's assistants. He looked at it, smiled, then printed it out and erased it. Using gloves, he put the printout in an envelope, wrote Callie's name and base address on it in block letters with a felt tip pen and put it in the base mail system.

Post by Tikatu on 31/05/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Wed, 18 Jul 2012 01:12:47 GMT
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Date: February 3, 2068

"I can't believe this!" Callie said angrily. "All my work is lost again! My samples are spoiled, the data's been erased, and I can't find those files."

Colonel Seese walked in. "Any answers, Professor?"

"I wish I could give you some, sir, but I keep running into a roadblock."

"Tell me what you've been able to determine so far."

"From what I can remember," said Callie, "International Rescue used a unique chemical to save the Space Cruiser, but that chemical and the fuel from the Cruiser inadvertently mixed together to create a superfertilizer. Some of the components of that chemical, though, I can't figure out."

"Would it cause a threat to the plant life?"

"That's just it, sir. Without knowing all the pieces, there's no way I can determine that."

"Keep at it, Professor." He saluted her and left the lab.

"Yes, sir."

She continued working until a college intern entered the lab. "Excuse me, Professor Spencer, but this letter was addressed to you."

"Me? All right, thanks." She opened the letter and read the contents. "What is this?"

Dear Professor Spencer,

It has come to our attention that you are working on a problem concerning our fire-fighting compound, dicetyline. Enclosed you will find the chemical make-up of said compound.

You will also find the opinions of our scientists concerning your particular investigation. Your findings may differ from ours, of course, but our scientists believe it is the combination of the highlighted elements that have caused the inordinate plant growth. Your investigation has intrigued us, and we are interested in pursuing a possible working relationship with you. If you are interested, please meet our aircraft at these coordinates tomorrow at 5:00 a.m. Eastern Standard Time.

Bring the letter with you and give it to the pilot of the craft. You need no other identification; we know you by sight.

Sincerely,
International Rescue

She read the findings carefully. "This is exactly what I was looking for, but I don't understand. I can't just leave in the middle of an investigation. What should I do?"

Post by TracyFan4Ever on 31/05/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Wed, 18 Jul 2012 01:14:19 GMT
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Date: February 4, 2068. Time: 4:57 a.m.

Callie waited for nearly 20 minutes at the exact coordinates listed in the letter. "Almost time. I just hope I don't get into serious trouble with the military for this." Suddenly, she was blinded by a bright light. "What the--?"

The craft landed on the ground but kept the spotlight on her. "Callie Spencer," called the voice from inside the craft. "Did you bring your letter with you?"

"Of course I brought it, but I want to know what this is all about."

"You will get your answers soon enough. Now step inside please. I'll turn off the light so you can see your way."

When the light faded, her eyes were showing the after light effect, causing her to squint. She did manage to walk into the craft, despite not being able to see what it was.

The craft managed to take off without arousing attention from anyone.

Callie, though, could not help but think about what she could learn. This had better be worth it. Otherwise, my superiors are going to have my head. I do want to know what these scientists have to say.

She had no idea where she was going, but the male pilot spoke. "We're approaching the base now."

"We are...already? We must be close to the Cape."

"Fasten your seat belt, Professor. I'm changing to vertical flight."

"Vertical flight?"

"Base from Thunderbird 1. Approaching home now."

"F.A.B.," said a gruff male voice on the radio.

"Thunderbird 1?" Callie gasped. "You mean I'm coming into the International Rescue home base?"

"That's right, Professor."

Oh, wow! I'll finally get to meet these scientists to compare notes. She felt the ship landing on the ground, creating a light thud.

"We've arrived, Professor. Now, if you'll follow me..."

She was more curious than upset at this point, so she did as the pilot instructed, until they stopped at an unusual fixture on the wall. "What's this?"

"Place yourself on the wall and touch the two light fixtures please."

"Why? I don't--"

"Trust me. You'll be on the other side of the wall."

Callie touched the light fixtures, which activated something because she moved into the living room. "Curiouser and curiouser."

"I assure you, Professor Spencer," said the gruffly voiced man as he stood up. "It's not as strange as you think."

"M-Mr. Tracy's right," said a bespectacled young man. "I'm Brains. And this is my assistant Tin-Tin. We're the scientists looking into this matter for International Rescue."

She shook hands with the two scientists. "A pleasure to meet you, Brains, Tin-Tin. I'm just curious, though. Why am I here?"

The older gentleman spoke. "Professor Spencer, allow me to introduce myself. Jeff Tracy."

Callie shook his hand and realized to whom she was speaking. "Jeff Tracy, head of Tracy Industries?"

"Yes. I am also in charge of International Rescue."

"You are?"

"Mm-hmm. You read the letter. Please sit down, Professor. We brought you here because we feel you are highly qualified as both an astronaut and a chemical engineer."

"For Tracy Industries or for International Rescue?"

"Both, but honestly, we're more in need of a third astronaut at Thunderbird Five." He pressed a button on his desk. "Thunderbird Five from base."

Alan heard his father calling, and pressed a button to respond. "Thunderbird Five to base. What's going on?"

"Alan, say hello to Professor Callie Spencer. She may become the third astronaut in the Thunderbird Five monthly rotation."

"Hello, Professor. I'm sorry I can't be there in person, but Dad's right. With the increase in rescues, we're going to need a lot of help. With you in the rotation, John and I can take part in rescues, too."

"And," said Brains, "here on Earth you can work with us."

"Well, I never thought I'd have a chance at this, but...what will I say to the Colonel?"

"You needn't worry about that," Jeff stated. "I do have some clout at the WSA. I'm sure I can arrange a transfer for you to Tracy Industries as a consultant. So, what do you say? Will you join us?"

"Mr. Tracy, this is all happening so fast. Can I have a little time to consider this?"

"Of course, Professor. Just keep in mind that this is rather urgent, and things have to be set in motion for the transfer soon. Would you like a tour of the island and a chance to spend the night

here?"

"I'd like that, Mr. Tracy. Thank you."

Post by TracyFan4Ever on 31/05/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Wed, 18 Jul 2012 01:16:36 GMT
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02-04-2068: 3:15pm

"Man, McCain, you are a show-off."

Brandon smiled at his friend. "What do you expect, Aaron? I have a reputation to uphold!" Both men laughed as they walked to the small jump-plane. They had already made two jumps and had time for a third before it got dark.

As they sat waiting for the plane to reach altitude, Brandon thought back to how he had first met Aaron.

***** June 2060*****

Brandon had been in WASP for two years when he spotted Aaron Bradshaw. The young man had recently been assigned to the Tigershark and Brandon noticed his nervousness. At the first opportunity, Brandon introduced himself, showing Aaron around and helping him get familiarized with his new assignment. It wasn't long before Aaron was comfortable with his assignment and Brandon had made a new friend.

Everything was going smoothly until Brandon got the tragic news that his sister had been killed in a senseless act of violence. Shauna had been walking home from a friend's house when members of two rival gangs drove down the street shooting at each other. One of the shots missed its intended target, lodging in Shauna's neck, severing the main artery. She died instantly.

Brandon asked for and got compassion leave. As he was packing, Aaron came up to him, offering his condolences.

"Thanks, Aaron. I appreciate it." Brandon smiled sadly, none of his usual vibrancy present. "Listen, I'll be back in a couple of weeks. Think you can handle things without me?"

"I can handle things here. Everything will be okay when you get back."

*****End Flashback*****

"Come on, Aaron, let's go."

"Right behind you, pal." Both men leaped from the plane, enjoying the exhilaration of free fall.

Brandon did a couple of flips, the wind whipping at his jump suit. He looked down below him, looking for the familiar colors of his friend's parachute.

"Hey Aaron," Brandon said into the radio, "now would be a good time to pop the 'chute."

"Sorry, I got a little carried away. There was a few seconds silence; then Aaron's voice, full of panic, returned. "Brandon, the ripcord's jammed. I can't deploy my main chute!"

"Try the auxiliary!" Brandon looked down in time to see the auxiliary chute open then flutter uselessly in the wind.

Aaron was falling to a certain death unless... Gritting his teeth and streamlining his arms, Brandon shot like a bullet towards his friend. Reaching out, he tried to grab Aaron, but he was tantalizingly out of reach. Getting himself as close as he could, Brandon reached out again, this time grabbing Aaron's outstretched hand.

"Whatever you have in mind, you better do it quick, Brandon," Aaron said without ceremony, "because the ground is coming up really fast."

"We're going to do a tandem and I want you to do exactly what I tell you. Got it?"

"Got it."

Brandon maneuvered himself into position and, when he was sure that Aaron had wrapped his arms and legs around him as tight as he could, he deployed his 'chute. It was a welcome sight to both men as the 'silk' of the parachute blossomed above them.

When they touched down, they could hear the cheers and applause of the ground crew. As they walked towards the hangar, someone from a news crew stuck a mike in Brandon's face, asking him how he felt during his rescue attempt.

Brandon shook his head, replying drolly "You don't want me to tell you how I REALLY felt up there, do you?" The reporter turned her attention to Aaron.

"Young man, what are your feelings on your miraculous rescue?"

"To be honest, I thought I was going to die. If it weren't for his," Aaron indicated Brandon, "quick thinking, I would have wound up dead." The reporter asked a couple more questions then went to interview some of the other people present.

The two men continued their walk to the hangar, talking; Aaron relieved that Brandon's idea had worked and Brandon glad he hadn't lost his friend.

Post by MagicMaster8 on 01/06/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out

Date: Saturday, February 4, 2068; Time: 7 p.m.; Place: Tracy Island

"John has gone to get that mechanic from Lady Penelope's," Cherry Tracy reported to her father. He looked up and gave her a smile, then stood and opened his arms.

"How about a hug, Princess?" he asked. Cherry smiled back and came around to hug her adoptive father.

"Thanks, Princess. I needed that," he said as he kissed her on the forehead and sat back down. "Now, John is gone with Tracy One. It will still be after noon on Saturday when he gets to Penelope's. What's the status of the good professor?"

"Brains and Tin-Tin have taken her on a tour of the base," Cherry told Jeff. "And Gordon should be back in a little bit from his fishing trip with Alex. I radioed them about ten minutes ago."

"Thank you, Cherry. You've been a big help this weekend. I'm glad I could delegate the 'keeping track of people' business to you. I'll discuss the aquanaut candidates with Gordon when he gets here." Jeff looked over at the sofa where Dianne sat cross-legged, a small pile of data pads on one side of her, a larger one on the other.

"How's it going, dearest?"

Dianne sighed. "I've whittled the pile down to four candidates. But I'm having a hard time choosing just one."

"Is that LifeFlight nurse one of them? Dominic Kelly? He seems to be a real go-getter. Did you see John's note on the boy he found?"

"Yes, Jeff, I did. And he's still a candidate. But he's a surgical nurse by training. I'd really like an emergency room nurse. Like this Nikki Jackson." Dianne dropped the pads in her lap. "I just don't know how to choose!"

"Well, why just one? Why not two?" said a voice from behind them. Emily Tracy entered the lounge, balancing a tray of plates with slices of warm apple pie a la mode. Cherry got up from where she was idly perusing one of her mother's digital clipboards and took the tray from the elderly woman. "Thank you, Cherry." Kyrano followed with coffee on a tray and a glass of milk for the teenager.

"Two? Two nurses?" Jeff asked. Dianne almost bounced up and down in her excitement.

"Yes, two!" she exclaimed. "One to pilot and the other to help me treat. Or they switch off duties in the sickroom and in Thunderbird Seven. It would be much more flexible to have two nurses. That way, if one got sick, the other would be available." She got up and gave her mother-in-law a hug and a kiss. "What a terrific idea, Em! Thank you!"

"You're welcome, dearie." Emily passed out the pie, laying a piece down next to her

daughter-in-law, who looked up and murmured another "thank you". Dianne shuffled through her four candidates and finally selected two.

"Okay, Jeff," she said, getting up to pass the data padds over to her husband. "These are my top two. The others will be in reserve if these two don't want the position. Let's set up interviews as soon as possible. I really feel an urgency about more medical personnel."

"Nikki Jackson and Dominic Kelly." Jeff read the names. "Okay, love. You've got it."

The two looked up to see Gordon come in. He made a beeline for Dianne's pie, but Cherry reached out and smacked his hand as he reached for it.

"That's Mom's. Get your own."

"Ooh! Never knew little sisters could be so violent," he joked, putting the affected hand on Cherry's head and quickly ruffling her hair.

"Not the hair!" she shouted. He made a face at her, which she returned, and then he went to face his father. Both father and stepmother had looked at each other, rolled their eyes, and shaken their heads over their fourth son's antics.

"You wanted to see me, Dad?" Gordon asked. Dianne retreated back to the sofa and her pie and coffee.

"Yes, son. I want your input on our candidates for aquanaut recruits. I've brought the list down to three. All have fine qualifications, but I want you to look them over. You'll be the one training and working with him or her, after all."

Gordon looked over the three clipboards thoroughly, walking slowly around the room as he did so. When he had read the last one, he came back to the desk.

"McCain. Brandon McCain. He's got glowing reports from the toughest commander in all of WASP. The fact that he stayed the course for as long as he did says that he's loyal. He's got both above and below the surface capabilities, and is a dive master as well. He's even got some mechanical training and is part of Tracy Industries. Hell, he's better qualified than I am!"

"He doesn't have the experience you do, Gordon. He'll be under your command. And once Thunderbird Eight is complete, you and he will have separate crafts to pilot," Jeff reminded him.

"Yeah. I know. He's got more experience with the type of craft that Eight is going to be," Gordon said, a touch of melancholy in his voice.

Jeff looked at him keenly. "Gordon? Is there anything I need to know here?"

Gordon looked at Jeff. For a moment, Jeff could swear his son's eyes were haunted. Then he smiled and the impression left.

"Nah. I'm okay. Just have to get used to the fact that I'll no longer be the only aquanaut." He

scratched his head and scuffed his sandal. "You need me for anything else?"

"No, Gordon. Not really. If I do, I'll call you."

Gordon started to the doors to the patio. Then he turned back. "Hey, Dad. How's the construction going?"

Jeff smiled. "Very well. The sheer number of work crews is making things go easily. Each crew is responsible for half of one level. We'll get ten apartments out of the Cliff House, four two bedroom and six one bedroom studios. Of course we'll have to upgrade the entries and the monorail system. I want to put a speed monorail that connects directly with the lifts to the Villa. Of course, that's something you boys are going to have to work on. We can't have the work crews in Thunderbird Two's hangar, now can we?"

"No, we can't. When do we start that construction?"

"As soon as John gets back here with our mechanic candidate."

Gordon's eyes lit up. "You mean Lady Penelope's mini-mechanic? The one I danced with on New Year's Eve? Kat?"

Jeff chuckled. "Yes, Gordon. Kat. She'll be here in a few hours so don't go out fishing again, please. No matter how much Alex begs and pleads."

"Yes, sir." Gordon finally turned and left the house.

Jeff looked up as Dianne came and took his empty plate. "I hope we're choosing the right people, dear heart."

"We will, Jeff. We'll get the right ones."

Post by Tikatu on 01/06/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out

Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Sun, 22 Jul 2012 20:39:39 GMT

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Monday 6 February. 6.43 a.m. Tracy Aerospace Medical Base, Kansas.

The whine of distant aircraft mingled with the whistle of the wind as it swirled glittering snow crystals across the parking lot. Dominic pulled back the light, cottony curtains and squinted out, his breath misting on the glass. It took all his willpower not to draw something silly in the white film. Outside, the sun had reached the midpoint of its daily journey, and only thin wisps of cloud streaked the intense blue sky.

The laminate floor was cold, and his feet squeaked as he walked out of his bedroom, freshly showered and shaved. The scent of toast greeted him as he wandered into the small kitchen area.

Mmm, breakfast. Well, lunch is more correct, I guess, he thought. As he opened the fridge door to get some juice, the familiar clicking of a laptop keyboard drew his attention.

"Morning," he said as he reached for a glass.

The early afternoon sunlight glinted off Tom Hawkins's round glasses as he flashed Dominic a smile. Dominic's half-brother, a freelance magazine writer, Tom was trying to build up a good enough reputation to make it big.

"Good morning, Dak," the blond said cheerfully as he resumed his typing, the laptop balanced on his crossed legs. "There's breakfast, or lunch - whatever - made for you."

Dominic smiled at the nickname and nodded his thanks. He took a gulp of juice, picked up the plate Tom had left for him on the kitchen counter and flopped down on the sofa across from him.

"You got in later than usual this morning," Tom said, looking up from the monitor for the briefest of moments.

"An emergency case came in fifteen minutes before my shift ended. An early morning flight test went wrong," Dominic said, and took a bite of toast. "We were operating on him for about an hour; fitting a DHS."

"DHS?" Tom asked.

"Sorry, a dynamic hip screw." At Tom's still-confused expression, Dominic clarified. "It's like a prosthetic hip. Poor guy."

"Ah, I see. Well, Joshua was fine all night, and this morning."

"Good." Dominic wiped a few crumbs from his lips and took another drink. "I can't believe he's going to be three in December. It seems like just yesterday he was a screaming baby," he said with a lopsided smile.

Tom barked a laugh and peered over his glasses at some of his shorthand notes.

"Three? Joshua's only just turned two, Dak." He chuckled. "I remember the first time you and Mags brought him around. My ears still haven't recovered." They laughed. After a moment, he peered across at his brother. "How is she, anyway?"

Dominic shrugged and set his plate aside. Margaret Houston was his ex-girlfriend, a doctor, and the mother of his son. She had put work above family and left six months after the child's birth.

"I don't know. I haven't heard from her in months. Once she left for Boston Mercy, I knew she would never come back."

They sat in silence for a few moments, only the clicking of Tom's keyboard and the crows cawing from outside. Eventually, Dominic stood and cleared away his dishes. He glanced at his watch: one-thirty. It was time to pick up Joshua.

It was nearing little Joshua's bedtime when the letter came. Dominic was sitting on the floor of the apartment, colourful building blocks strewn around him and was watching as his young son built a progressively taller tower.

"Good boy!"

The child's bright blue eyes sparkled as he gave his father a huge grin, and then went back to his blocks. The door knocked, and Dominic ruffled the child's hair before going to answer it.

"Special delivery for a Mr D. A. Kelly," the young man said. He held out a letter and a clipboard, and Dominic signed for it.

"Thanks," he said, his brows knitted in confusion.

This is odd, Dom thought as he ripped the envelope open. Who sends me priority mail? He pulled out the short letter and his eyes widened as he read the writer's name.

Dear Mr Kelly,

Your application for a position on my personal medical staff has been successfully accepted. We have set up an interview for you on Wednesday February 8, 2068. If there is a problem, please send a reply to the return address. Otherwise, a representative of mine will meet you at the terminal entrance of the Tracy Industries Airbase, Kansas.

You are free to bring your son.

Sincerely,

Jeff Tracy,
CO Tracy Industries

Dominic gaped at the letter. Yes, he had sent away an application, but he had never expected to get a reply! He laughed and re-read the letter. Joshua looked over and smiled at his father's joy. Dominic picked him up and swung him around; the child giggled and clapped his hands.

"Da!" He said.

"That's right, Jak! Daddy might be getting a new job!"

Post by ArtisticRainey on 01/06/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Sun, 22 Jul 2012 20:45:03 GMT

England

"So, Ms Williamson, how do you want your hair done today?" Janine asked her friend.

Kat laughed. "What's with the sudden formality, Janine?"

Janine whispered, "It's his nibs, him that owns the shop, he's over there, just seeing how we work and treat our customers, et cetera."

"Well," Kat replied, "I would really like a change, I think I look too school-girlish with plaits, don't you? I want to look more grown up and sophisticated."

"Ooh er," Janine sniffed. "That's what happens when you work for the nobility."

Kat grinned at Janine. "You know I'm not like that, I just want to appear more my age."

Kat explained what she wanted and Janine set about washing and styling Kat's hair.

Kat inwardly hugged herself. Only a few days ago, Lady Penelope had talked to her and what she had told Kat almost took her breath away.

Mr Jefferson Tracy had expressed a wish that Kat should fly to his family home on an island in the Pacific for a look around and for an interview to see whether both she and Mr Tracy could come to some agreement over her working on his fleet of family vehicles. Lady Penelope had recommended her to him and arrangements were being put into action to fly her to the island.

"There, madam, how does that look?"

Kat was suddenly jolted out of her daydreams and looked into the mirror.

Staring back was still a young girl, but gone was the long hair and fringe. Janine had cut it, feathering it into her face in layers, getting longer until it fell just to her shoulders and turned under slightly. There were also some layers in the back, so that it gave a slightly-tousled appearance.

"You can still clip it back for work," Janine said, "but you can also wear it loose for that tousled, just got out of bed look. It would look nice with highlights in," suggested Janine.

"No thanks, I like the colour as it is, thanks." said Kat.

On Monday morning Kat drove to Foxleyheath to await the plane that was to take her to the Tracy home.

"Kat!" Lady Penelope exclaimed. "Your hair is lovely, it really suits you a little more shaped and shorter."

"What time is the plane expected?"

"Oh, not until noon, but I think I will go through some of the finer details, so that you will know what to expect when you arrive."

Kat felt excited, but with a tinge of apprehension. Going to an unknown destination and meeting people that she had only met once before seemed kind of scary in an exhilarating way. True, she had met the Tracy family at Lady Penelope's New Year's Eve party, but that had been purely on a social standing and she had no idea at that time what the future had in store of her. She tried to wrack her brain to think of the names as they were introduced, but it was no good. She could only remember Jeff and his wife Dianne.

Suddenly the sound of an engine was heard overhead. "Looks like your pilot has arrived," Lady Penelope said.

So, here goes, Kat thought to herself. She went to get her overnight bag and started to follow Lady Penelope out of the mansion.

The jet had come down on a small airstrip at the back of the mansion, and taxied as close to the house as possible. A tall blond man with a ready smile climbed down from the pilot's seat.

"John! What a pleasure to see you again!" Lady Penelope said, holding out her hands and giving John a peck on the cheek. She turned to Kat. "John, I would like you to meet my mechanic, and possibly soon your own, Ms Katy-Jane Williamson. Kat this is John Glenn Tracy, the third of Jeff Tracy's sons."

Kat held out her hand politely. "I'm pleased to meet you, Mr Tracy."

"As I am pleased to meet you, Ms Williamson," he said with a winning grin. "But I'm just John. Mr Tracy is my father."

Kat laughed. "Then you must call me Kat." A memory surfaced. "Oh! I seem to remember your youngest brother asking me why I was named after an animal."

"That sounds like Ty, all right. I'm sorry we didn't meet at the New Year's Eve party, but I was elsewhere on family business." In actuality, he had just begun his stint in Thunderbird Five to allow Alan to attend the New Year's Eve party since he had been home for Christmas.

"John, could you stay for luncheon? Parker is about to lay the table." Lady Penelope asked.

"Lady Penelope, I am under strict instructions from Grandma to eat with you, no matter what meal is offered," John replied. "She thinks I need some fattening up."

John took Kat's bag from her and stowed it aboard the jet, then offered his arm to each lady and the three entered the mansion.

Post by Tawnyangel22 on 01/06/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Sun, 22 Jul 2012 20:46:56 GMT
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Date: Tuesday, February 8, 2068; Time: 5:54 a.m.; Place: Tracy Island

Dianne rolled over to see her husband's side of the bed empty. She lay still and listened for a moment, then got up and peered into the bathroom, hoping to see her husband perhaps relaxing in the Jacuzzi. No one was there.

She pulled her green silk bathrobe with the peacock on the back over her skimpy satin chemise and slid her feet into a pair of green silk slippers then headed down the hall to the lounge. Sure enough, there was Jeff, in bathrobe and slippers, silvered hair tousled from sleep, poring over the data pads on his desk. He looked up as the slight noise from the ornate grill between lounge and study announced her arrival.

"Still looking over those pilot recommendations?" she asked as she approached.

Jeff sat back in his chair with a sigh. "Yes. Scott wasn't much help. Though he did mention that a good helicopter pilot that he knew had just signed on at Tracy Industries and we should consider her. But her name isn't in here and I'd like to see her get some flight time with us before she's a candidate. I just don't know how to choose!"

"I understand the dilemma. We will need more than one pilot...."

"Yes, but I want to bring them on one at a time. The pilot is crucial and if the one we choose doesn't make the grade while here, I'd rather as few people go back to civilization with our secrets as possible. Besides, most of these guys and gals are hotshots and mavericks. Their records show it. How would they respond to being asked to ferry kids to a friend's house or Mother to the grocery? Because that would ostensibly be part of their job description here."

"Then don't take a hot-shot or a maverick." Dianne picked up a few clipboards and looked through them. She handed one back to Jeff. "What about this one?"

"Christopher Jordan. Former RAF, been working for Tracy Industries in Europe for several years. Kelly Martin says he was deferential and charming to her. 'Looked to my every comfort'. Hmm. He's had to ferry a lot of people around, but he has the experience with the jets and high-speed aircraft. No complaints about his flying or his interpersonal skills...." Jeff glanced up at Dianne. "You may be on to something here."

"Maybe." Dianne said, smiling as she came around the desk and sat on his lap. She wrapped her arms around his neck and kissed him on the cheek. Jeff began to feel a familiar heat rise within him.

"Okay, we'll start with him. I'll send off the memo to our people in England, and get him out here within the week." Jeff pressed a couple of buttons on the pad in his hand. It downloaded the file into Jeff's personal computer and shot it off to the people in England, where it was still Monday. "He'll get the message either Monday evening or this morning. Once morning reaches England, of course."

Jeff put the padd down and turned his attention to his wife.

"Now that I've dealt with selecting a new pilot, how do I deal with you?" he teased.

She silenced him with a passionate kiss.

"Come back to our suite and find out," she said breathily. A smile slowly crossed his face. He got up from his chair with one arm firmly around her waist and they returned to their bed to answer his question.

Post by Tikatu on 01/06/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Sun, 22 Jul 2012 20:57:47 GMT
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Monday 6th February, 4:00pm Queen Charlotte's and Chelsea Hospital.

Nicole sat at the nurse's station and looked at the clock. She had an hour until her shift ended. The atmosphere on her ward had died down since the last emergency came through. A family of four had suffered from Carbon monoxide poisoning. Luckily for them the mother woke up from a severe pain in her side and slight nausea. She tried to wake her husband and failed. After failing to wake up her children, she called for emergency services. If she hadn't of woken up, the family wouldn't have survived.

Nicole finished her nurse's report and closed her folder. It was defiantly quieter, especially without her chatty friend, Evie, around.

Her shift ended 30 minutes ago.

"Finished your report?" A voice asked from the other side of the desk.

It took a while for Nicole to realise that someone was speaking to her. "Oh sorry, Danny, I was miles away. Erm, yeah, I've finished my report, finally. I'm going to have to check on the Howard family soon. Could you do me a favour? Could you help out?" she asked her colleague.

"Sure. What happened with the mother?" Danny leaned on the desk.

"The pain that woke her up was caused by acute appendicitis. So she's been moved to the care of Dr Williams."

Almost immediately an alarm sounded to signify that one of the patients were in distress.

Nicole and Danny ran to the room that housed the patient. Upon entering they saw a young man convulsing on the floor.

"I pressed t-the alarm. H-He fell to the ground and began to have a fit," one of the patients in the room explained.

"Danny, page Dr Malone quickly," Nicole ordered. She turned to the other patients in the room, "How long has he been like this?"

"He's been like this for about 30 seconds."

Danny left the room to do as she asked, while Nicole tended to the patient. She grabbed a small rubber ring from the cabinet and sat down by the patient. After checking that his airway was clear, Nicole inserted the rubber ring between the patient's teeth to stop him from biting his tongue. She then turned him onto his side and held onto his arms and head to stop him from injuring himself.

It wasn't long before Danny returned to the scene with Dr Malone in tow.

"How long has he been convulsing?" the Doctor asked.

"All together about 3 minutes. One of the patients raised the alarm." Nicole still held on as the patient's convulsions began to slow down.

Once he had stopped, Dr Malone, Nicole and Danny carried him back to his bed.

"Ok, you two. I've got him now."

"Ok Doc." Danny led Nicole out of the room. "We better get on and do our checks on the Howard family."

As soon as Danny closed the door behind them a female voice made itself known over the PA. "This is a staff announcement. Could nurse Jackson please report to Dr Lierman's office please? That's nurse Jackson to Dr Lierman's office. Thank you."

"Nikki, you go ahead. I'll get on do the checks." Danny put his hand on her shoulder.

"You're so sweet. Thanks, Dan." With that Nicole left her colleague to see her boss.

xxxx

"My dear Penelope, are you sure about this? I don't want to get her hopes up only to be let down."

"She will not. My friend is interested in hiring her. Of course she'll have time to think about it and see the facilities in which she will be working in. She'll also have the chance to meet the rest of the personnel," Lady Penelope explained.

"Well if she decides to leave us it would be a sad day. She is one of my best nurses and will be missed." Michael Lierman, clasped his hands in front of him. "But I've got to admit, it would be a good opportunity to work abroad. I wish that I had the chance to do that when I was younger."

"You are still young, my friend." Lady Penelope smiled.

They both looked at the door once they heard a knock from its direction.

"Come in," Dr Lierman answered.

Nicole slowly opened the door. "You wanted to see me?"

"Yes. Please come in and close the door."

Nicole did as she was asked and smiled towards Lady Penelope. Dr Lierman stood up and began his introductions.

"Nicole Jackson, this is my good friend Lady Penelope."

Lady Penelope stood up in front of Nicole smiled and held out her hand. "It's very nice to finally meet you Nicole. I've heard a lot about you from Dr Lierman."

Nicole accepted and returned the graceful handshake. "Pleased to meet you Lady Penelope. I hope it's all good things that Dr Lierman told you about me."

"Extremely good." Penelope took her seat once again. "He speaks highly of the work you've done in this hospital. Which is why I'm here to see you."

Nicole was surprised by the fact that Dr Lierman spoke highly of her work. So highly, that he spoke to Lady Penelope about it. "Me?"

"Yes you." Lady Penelope thought about where to begin. "I have a friend who is looking for extra medical staff. He asked me along with other friends of his to give him recommendations on whom to hire. As you might have seen, I was here last month talking to Dr Lierman about this opportunity for one of his nurses. We extensively read through the reports of his staff and were very pleased by yours."

"Thank you. So what is this opportunity and who is hiring? If you don't mind me asking."

"I don't mind at all. The employers name is Jeff Tracy and it's with his company Tracy..."

"Industries," Nicole finished. "I'm sorry to interrupt you. But that is a big and very successful company. I've not met anyone who hasn't heard of that company or of the man behind the company."

"Glad to know that you know of it and of Jeff Tracy." Lady Penelope smiled. "Well he is looking for medical staff and I passed on your name. He is -- as I am -- impressed by your work and interested in hiring you. He would like the chance to meet you and show you the facilities in which you'll be working. Of course you do not have to rush in your decision making."

"What do you think about it, Dr Lierman?" Nicole asked.

"Nikki, I've got to admit, I was surprised when Lady Penelope approached me with this news. As I

have said countless of times to Lady Penelope, I think this is a very good opportunity and I wish that I had the chance." Dr Lierman smiled. "It's all down to you now."

"So when do I meet Mr Tracy?" Nicole queried.

"I will get in contact with him and tell him that you're interested. He'll arrange for one of his representatives to meet you and pick you up. As soon as I get more details, I'll let you know immediately." Lady Penelope stood up. "Unfortunately I must go. I have a very busy day."

Nicole stood up and shook Lady Penelope's hand again. "I must go also. I still have my shift to get through. It was nice meeting you and I'll look forward to hearing from you. I'll have to get some time off from work if I'm going to meet Mr Tracy."

They both looked at Dr Lierman, who laughed. "Of course I'll grant you some time off." He stood up and stood next to Lady Penelope.

"Well I better go. Thank you for letting me know about the job." Nikki smiled and left the room to go back to her job.

Post by Nikki-browneyes1 on 01/06/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Sun, 22 Jul 2012 21:00:54 GMT
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Date: Monday 7th February, 2068; Time: 5.45pm Place: Starbucks, Heathrow

Christopher Jordan squeezed his girlfriend's hands gently as he kissed her.

"I love you." He smiled as he leaned back in his chair to gaze at the beautiful girl sitting opposite him.

Anna Marchant smiled back and picked up her cup of coffee, taking a sip.

"I love you too," she said, "and I'm sorry about me not being around for the RAF reunion. They want me to do some extra shifts."

"I don't mind," Christopher said as he stood up, "I'll walk you to your plane."

Anna got up from the table and took Christopher's hand. They walked to the departure area where Anna was going to be working.

They talked about many things. Christopher wanted to ask an important question, but he got the impression that Anna wasn't in the mood.

"Ah well." He shrugged inwardly as he kissed her goodbye. He waved as she went down the tunnel to the boarding area.

Looking at the clock, he noticed that he only had a few minutes to get to work.

He managed to with seconds to spare.

Harry Graham glared at him. "you are cutting it a bit too fine Jordan."

"I had to see my girlfriend off," Christopher said as he threw himself into his seat. Clicking his mouse, he scanned the emails on his system.

One caught his eye.

"Jeff Tracy?" he said with a hiss.

He clicked on the box to open the email, and his eyes widened as he read the information contained within.

"Bloody hell!" he exclaimed.

Post by TheWrongTrousers on 01/06/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Sun, 22 Jul 2012 21:02:43 GMT
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England, 2068

Lady Penelope accompanied John and Kat to the jet.

"Bye Lady Penelope," Kat said, hugging her friend.

Lady Penelope hugged Kat back and gave her a kiss on the cheek. "Take care of her," she told John.

"I certainly will," John assured her.

Once on board, John saw that Kat was safely belted in and then started the aeroplane's engines.

Kat felt the exhilaration as the aircraft climbed into the sky. She had never felt this way before. Going to a new destination and possibly a new life excited her. She hoped vehemently that Mr Tracy would like her and accept her as a member of his staff.

Kat stole a look at John. He was so good looking.

John thought about what his brothers had said about her. She was very pretty, as pretty as Gordon had stated.

"Are you okay?" John asked solicitously.

"Yes, thanks," Kat replied.

"You know, you seem so small and frail to be a mechanic."

"Oh, honestly! You men, you all think the same. You see a girl and instantly think that she is not up to the job, or she is not capable of dealing with engines."

John smiled to himself. And definitely as feisty as Virgil had stated.

John thought to himself that it would be an interesting meeting with Brains, as Brains always referred to Lady Penelope's mechanic as he. John grinned to himself; he would definitely like to be in on that particular meeting, especially now knowing Kat's feelings towards men and their prejudices against female mechanics.

John asked Kat how she started working for Lady Penelope, and Kat relayed to him her life up to and including this visit to Tracy Island.

"Do you have any hobbies or interests?" Kat asked.

John told her about his fascination with astronomy. Kat was very interested. "I have always wanted to know more about the stars and planets. You will have to teach me, if I start working with your family." John was pleased at her interest, and assured Kat that he would show her the stars and planets should his father employ her.

"And I don't see why he wouldn't, not with Lady Penelope's glowing recommendation," he told her with a grin.

Suddenly, John said, "Tracy Island ahead."

Kat thought, This is it; this is up to me now. I must make a good impression. I really want to work with this family.

Post by Tawnyangel22 on 02/06/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Sun, 22 Jul 2012 21:05:57 GMT
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Date: February 6, 2068

Callie Spencer tried to relax at her home about a mile from Cape Canaveral, but she couldn't help think back to the night she spent on Tracy Island, home to not only the head of Tracy Industries, but also International Rescue.

*****The Day Before*****

Brains and Tin-Tin gave her a first-class tour of Tracy Island, which left her amazed. "It's incredibly huge! How could this place stay a secret for so long?"

"Believe me," Brains said, "Mr. Tracy has done so much to build the island and the organization."

"I don't have to ask about why the secret has to remain. Everybody wants this technology."

Tin-Tin nodded. "Yes, even those with evil intentions."

"It's just like the military with our own secrets--oh, dear. Now that I've got this information, how can I tell Colonel Seese without giving you away?"

"Perhaps you can add the information into your report without revealing the source. Will Colonel Seese ask questions?"

"Of course he will. He's my superior."

"Don't worry, Professor Spencer," said Brains. "All you have to do is show him the information we gave you. The letter, though, is private."

With a yawn, Callie turned in for the night, but she took what she had learned into consideration. The colonel's going to wonder where I've been for the past 24 hours. Hopefully this info from International Rescue can keep me from getting into big trouble.

*****Earlier this morning*****

Callie was already dressed and ready to leave when she was stopped by Jeff. "Professor, surely you wouldn't leave without breakfast."

She sighed. "I'm sorry, Mr. Tracy. I've been so worked up over this I don't have the word 'relax' in my dictionary right now."

"Even the head of International Rescue has to relax once in a while. Please, have breakfast with us."

"All right, I'll take you up on that offer, and thank you."

She joined the family at the table--to her surprise, a very large family--for the morning meal. She also noticed a woman sitting next to her. "Hi."

"Hello. I'm Katy-Jane Williamson."

"Callie Spencer." She shook hands with her. "Related to the family?"

"Me, oh, no. I may be getting a job with the family as a mechanic. What brings you out here?"

Discovering that Kat did not know about International Rescue, Callie said, "I was given a

recommendation for a possible job with Tracy Industries."

"That's good. Tracy Industries is doing a lot of hiring lately. I guess it's a big expansion."

"People need jobs, and Mr. Tracy is a good employer, or so I've been hearing."

"Mm-hmm. Planning to stay a while?"

"No. I'm going home as soon as I've had breakfast. I'm going to decide on whether to take the communications/engineering job."

"All I have to say is good luck to you."

"Thanks, Miss Williamson."

"Please, just call me Kat."

"If you just call me Callie."

*****Present Time*****

Callie gained some new friends on her whirlwind visit to Tracy Island, all while considering taking that job.

"What an opportunity," she said to herself. "A chance to use my knowledge for everybody's benefit." She looked at the envelope containing the information. "I can give this to Colonel Seese." Her decision soon became clear. "I'm going to take that job."

She made two important phone calls. The first was to her family in Opp, Alabama. "Dad, I've been offered a job at Tracy Industries for my communications and engineering skills. I'm going to start as soon as possible."

Before her second call, she took a small sheet of paper containing a telephone number. When she called, she received instructions to leave a message. "Mr. Tracy, I have decided to accept your job offer. I look forward to assisting International Rescue and Tracy Industries to the best of my ability."

Post by TracyFan4Ever on 03/06/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Sun, 22 Jul 2012 21:20:58 GMT
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Monday 6 February 2068

Kat climbed back into the jet for the return flight to England.

She had asked for John to fly her back and her request was granted.

Flashback

On the way back, Kat closed her eyes, trying to take in and assess all that had happened since landing on Tracy Island.

She remembered being ushered into a rather spacious lounge and meeting the Tracy family. What a lot of people to suddenly meet and to try and remember their names!

Mr Tracy had shaken her hand and formally introduced her to his wife, Dianne, and his sons and daughter. Kat remembered them all from Lady Penelope's New Year's Eve party, but somehow here on this island, they all seemed different.

She smiled and she shook hands with Scott, Virgil, Gordon, and Cherry.

Suddenly to her acute embarrassment, she was unable to stifle a yawn. Dianne looked at the slightly sleepy young girl and said, "Jeff, dear, I think we should show Ms. Williamson to her room. I think after her long flight she should be allowed to rest."

"Oh, but I'm really not sleepy at all," Kat tried to argue.

"Ms. Williamson, it's 9 in the morning on the day after you left England. That's quite a bit of jet lag to deal with. Just get some rest now and you'll be all the better for it." Dianne told her. She asked John to pick up Kat's bag and firmly led Kat away to a guest room.

However, once Kat had gotten undressed and laid on the bed, she instantly fell asleep.

"I think she will sleep for a few hours. She certainly looked tired," Dianne said to her husband.

"Yes." John added. "We talked all the way down here."

Kat stirred and looked around; she seemed slightly disorientated. Where am I? Oh yes, on Tracy Island. Goodness, how long have I been asleep? She looked at her watch: 12.00 noon. Gracious, how rude they must think I am, arriving for an all important interview and going to sleep for so long.

She got out of bed, showered and dressed and left her room, hoping that she would be able to find her way around.

An amused male voice made her spin round. "So, the sleepy mechanic is awake?" Kat saw Gordon approaching her.

"What must you all think of me, falling asleep."

"If Mother said you needed to rest, then no one will think anything of it," he replied.

He led her to the dining room where the family were just about to start lunch. "How are you feeling

now?" Dianne asked.

"Much better, thank you," replied Kat.

After lunch, Kat was taken by Tin-Tin to meet Brains. Brains had been forewarned that Lady Penelope's mechanic was a young woman, so it didn't come as a complete shock, although he was rather taken aback at how petite she was.

Kat was shown around the island, and the fleet of family vehicles that it was hoped she would be in charge of. It was such a lovely place, and Kat, resting her arms on the rails surrounding the veranda, soaking in the hot sunshine while looking at the blue sky and sea and the white sand, couldn't help thinking of the cold, wet February day she had left behind.

Gordon and Virgil accompanied the trio for part of the tour.

"You do look so different," Virgil said.

"Hm," Kat remarked. "At the New Year's Eve party I was dressed up especially for the occasion. Here I am dressed more for work. But," she added, "I have had my hair cut."

Following the tour came the all-important interview.

Mr Tracy immediately put her at her ease by referring to her as Kat. On the desk in front of him he had copies of her exam certificates and Lady Penelope's recommendation. "So, let me see, you have been working for Lady Penelope for four years?"

"Yes, sir," Kat replied.

"And for all of that time, you have been happy working for her?"

"Yes, sir," Kat replied again. Think of something interesting to say, her inner self seemed to say.

"Mr Tracy," Kat started. "Yes, I have been very happy working for Lady Penelope, and she has been the ideal employer. However, it was on her instigation that I went to college to further my qualifications. At first, I had to admit that I couldn't see the reasoning behind this, but now I do. I have always felt that I could be stretched far more than simply working on FAB-1. I feel enormously guilty at being here, being interviewed for a job that may take me away from the life I have known with Lady Penelope. But on the other hand, as Lady Penelope said, I would not be leaving her completely as she is a good friend of yours and would always be part of my life."

Jeff nodded in agreement. He seemed to like her answer, although he was concerned at how slight of stature she was. But if Penny had been happy with her and she had done her work to suit Penny, then he would give Kat's application serious consideration.

The interview was over and Kat was taken by Tin-Tin to relax for the rest of the day. Tyler and Alex wanted to show her the games room and so Kat enjoyed the company of the two youngest Tracy boys along with Tin-Tin, Virgil, and Gordon.

Next morning while Kat was eating breakfast, a young woman came in to join them. She introduced herself as Callie. Kat thought now nice she was and hoped that if she was chosen to work on this delightful island that the two of them could become friends.

All too soon it was time for Kat to return to England.

Present time:

"Earth to Kat." John's voice jolted Kat out of her thoughts.

"Oh, sorry, John, I haven't been much company on this journey, have I?"

"Don't worry, you had a lot of things to think about. But we are about to land at Foxleyheath."

"Will you be staying for a while? After all, I think your Grandma would obviously like you to eat with us again."

John laughed. "Yes, I shall stay for a short while."

Lady Penelope greeted them. She looked keenly at Kat. "I shall let you know all about it when we are on our own," Kat assured her.

Just before John left to return to the jet, Kat said, "Thank you John, for flying me to the island and back. I hope we shall meet again."

John looked down at her. "I am sure we will," he said, climbing back into the pilot's seat.

Tracy Island

Once Kat was on her way home, Jeff and Dianne discussed the young woman.

"I liked her," Jeff told his wife.

"Yes, I did too," Dianne replied.

"And," Jeff continued. "Even if she is so petite, I could see a certain strength there, and from what Virgil has said, she can certainly stand up for herself."

"I am going to offer her the position of mechanic for the family fleet, and maybe in the future the Thunderbird crafts themselves." And he dialed Lady Penelope's number.

Post by TawnyAngel22 on 04/06/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Sun, 22 Jul 2012 21:24:22 GMT
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Wednesday 8th February. Tracy Aerospace Airbase.

Military personnel and Tracy Aerospace workers bustled about the airbase, and Dominic flicked the brake down on Joshua's stroller. He hadn't been sure, exactly, on what was going to happen. The airbase was a strange place to hold an interview. And then there was Joshua; he glanced down at his son's blond feathery hair. Allowing him to bring the child was strange indeed, and it hadn't been a detail on the application form he had been expecting them to pick up on.

It hadn't been specified where in the terminal he was to meet them, but he guessed that they would spot him before he spotted them. Considering I haven't got a clue who this 'representative' will be. He shook his head and crouched down beside the stroller, running a hand through Joshua's light hair.

"Hey Jak. It's exciting isn't it? Daddy could be getting a new job, and we could be moving to a new home. That'll be fun, won't it? Say 'fun' for me."

The child made a noise akin to 'bah', and Dominic smiled. It would come.

"Mr Kelly?" A lightly southern accented female voice called.

Dominic stood and turned, gently flipping the stroller around too. Two people were coming towards him, one a tall woman, probably in her forties, with waves of dark brown hair, the other a taller man, around about thirty, Dom guessed, with chestnut brown hair and a friendly smile.

"Yes, I'm Dominic Kelly," he said. "You must be representatives of Mr Tracy's."

The woman stepped forward and held out her hand.

"Doctor Dianne Tracy. And this is one of Mr Tracy's sons, Virgil."

She shook firmly; Dominic was impressed by her confidence. He was beginning to like her already. Virgil held out his hand and they shook, too.

"Pleased to meet you, Dominic."

Dianne crouched down in front of the stroller.

"And who's this little fella?" She smiled and waved at the child, who was silent for a few moments, before gauging her as no threat and giving her a big grin.

"This is my son, Joshua."

"Well, Joshua, have you ever been on a plane before?" Dianne asked.

Dominic's brow furrowed.

"Plane?" he asked.

"We're taking you back to Tracy Island with us so you can have a look around as well as an interview," Virgil said.

"I see," Dominic said, thinking, This is very odd.

"Well, we'd better be on our way." Dianne stood up and brushed herself off. "Ready to go, Mr Kelly?"

"Sure thing, Dr Tracy."

Dianne motioned for him to walk, and Dominic pushed the stroller, hoping that everyone on the island was just as nice as these people seemed to be.

Post by ArtisticRainey on 04/06/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Sun, 22 Jul 2012 21:26:25 GMT
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Date: Wednesday, February 8, 2068; Time: 3:30 p.m.; Place: Tracy Aerospace Base, Kansas

Virgil took up the pilot's seat, while Dianne sat in back with Dominic. Sitting in the small jet was also a lovely dark-skinned girl in her early 20s. Dominic gave her a smile as he settled Joshua in a special airplane car seat. Wonder how they knew I'd need this? And I wonder who she is? Another candidate?

"Nicole, this is Dominic Kelly and his son, Joshua. Dominic, meet Nicole Jackson," Dianne said, making the introductions. Dominic took a moment to shake hands with her.

"I'm puzzled, Dr. Tracy," Nikki asked. "I thought that this was our destination. I was told that I would be working for Tracy Industries."

"I'm sorry, Nicole. You were misinformed. The position you're being considered for is with our family," Dianne explained. "And, contrary to popular belief, we don't live in Kansas."

"Then where do you live?" Nicole asked.

"On an island in the Pacific," Virgil called back. He was busy doing his pre-flight checks and getting clearance to take off.

"Yes, we're taking both... I mean, all three of you out our island home so you can look around and see what it is you're getting into. And for your interviews, of course," Dianne said with a smile, turning her seat to look at them. They barely noticed when the jet lifted off the ground, but Joshua suddenly cried as the pressure changed and his ears hurt. Dominic fished around in the diaper bag and pulled out a sipper cup to give to the toddler. Gulping down the drink helped Joshua's ears and he stopped crying.

"So, are we both candidates for the same job?" Dominic asked.

"No. You are our first choice candidates for two nursing positions. I'm finding that I need two helpers in the family infirmary," Dianne admitted.

This is odd, Nikki thought. She asked, "How much illness is there at your home? Or are there many accidents?"

"A good question, and one that I'll address later," Dianne told her.

The flight passed amiably, with Dianne moving into the pilot's seat at one point while Virgil came back to the passenger area.

"We're very careful about flight hours, especially since flying is our main way of getting anywhere," Virgil explained.

"I can understand that," Dominic said. "Are there other children on the Island? I mean, Dr. Tracy mentioned her natural children."

"There are eight of us all told now," Virgil told him, stretching his arms and his shoulders. "My four brothers and I are from our father's first marriage, and our Dad adopted Dianne's three when he married her. We all call her 'Mom', though Gordon has been known to call her 'Doc' upon occasion."

"A kind of 'his, hers, theirs' situation?" Nikki asked with a grin.

"Well, yes, although there are no 'theirs'," Virgil said, chuckling.

"But are all of you adults?" Dominic asked, steering the conversation back to his question.

"I'm sorry, Mr. Kelly, I'd forgotten your question. No, Dianne's three are all minors. But none of them are as young as your Joshua here," Virgil said, indicating the sleeping tot. "The closest to him would be Tyler, who's nine."

"Ah. Now I understand," Dominic replied. How am I going to work if there's no one to care for Jak?

"Tracy Four to Tracy Island. Requesting permission to land." The three in the passenger's cabin could hear Dianne's request, and the deep voice that answered back with said permission.

"Well, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Kelly, welcome to Tracy Island!" Virgil said with a grin.

Post by Tikatu on 05/06/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out

Dominic opted to carry young Joshua in his arms, rather than take the stroller, and he was infinitely glad that he always carried sun cream in the diaper bag. Kansas in January was very cold indeed, a huge difference from a Tropical island. Glad I like the heat, anyway. When he, Nikki, Virgil and Dianne reached the villa, a man whose face Dominic knew well greeted them. After all, he did work on one of his airbases.

Jeff stepped out from behind his desk and shook hands with both of the prospective employees.

"I'm Jeff Tracy, as you know. It's good to meet you two."

"Nice t' meet you, Mr Tracy." Dominic said. "This is my son, Joshua." He smiled at the young boy in his arms.

Jeff grinned, and then went to Dianne's side. Dianne smiled at him, and then at the two nurses.

"Well, before we get on with the interviews, I suggest we let you two freshen up."

"Good idea." Said Jeff.

About an hour later, Dominic and Nikki followed Dianne through to what was referred to as 'the sick room'. He was bereft of Joshua, having laid him down to sleep in one of the guest rooms under the careful watch of Dianne and Jeff's only daughter, Cherry. Dominic was as always apprehensive about leaving his son, but Cherry seemed sensible and confident, and he trusted her.

The two were being given a quick tour of the actual facility before their interviews, and Dominic was beginning to feel apprehensive. It doesn't look like there's much work for a surgical nurse, here. He thought. This is all family med. NOT my specialty. The sick room was well stocked, and had beds hocked up to an assortment of monitoring equipment. This is all top-of-the-range stuff. But why do they need it all? Surely the island can't be that dangerous to live on.

Soon enough, he found himself sitting at a large table in a room they called the study, with Mr and Dr Tracy facing him. They asked him generic questions such as, "Where have you worked?." "How do you enjoy your work?" and, "What other fields of medicine have you studied?" Then, of course, his time with LifeFlight came up, and Dom found himself enthusiastic about his work.

"Oh yes, I've been a member of LifeFlight for six or seven years, now. I enjoy working in the field, and I've got my helijet pilot's license. I've also gained many advanced piloting courses. It can be dangerous, but that's a small risk to take when you think about how many lives we've saved."

"Tell me about some of your rescue work?" Jeff asked. He sat forward and laced his fingers together, and Dominic took a deep breath. He was very nervous.

"Well, one of the most serious rescue missions I was ever sent on was when tornadoes swept

Midwest America a few years back. I had to fly the helijet in hurricane force winds. But there were no fatalities, thank God. More recently, we were deployed as part of a search and rescue mission for a kidnapped teenager. It was harrowing work, but we found him." Just in time. Dom's face saddened at the memory of the distressed and wounded teen.

When the interview was over he excused himself as Nikki went in for her interview and went to check on Joshua. The tot was still sleeping, and he gave Cherry a grateful smile.

"Thanks, pet."

Dom sat down on the bed and ran a gentle hand over his child's head. Thank God the interview was over.

Post by ArtisticRainey on 06/06/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Sun, 22 Jul 2012 21:34:09 GMT
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Wednesday, February 8th 2068, New York City

"Hmrpf!" The last box hit the floor with a resounding thump. It had taken nearly all day for Elise to move her belongings off of the delivery van and up into her new apartment. It wasn't lavish by any means, but it was cozy, livable, and best of all, affordable. After all, she was lucky to have found this place on such short notice. Located near Greenwich Village, Elise had discovered this apartment within a day of being hired as a corporate pilot for Tracy Industries. The whirlwind move from Los Angeles to New York had been managed in just under a week and she was now exhausted.

Flopping down on an overstuffed chair, a glass of ice water in her hand, Elise reflected on this past week, thinking back to when she'd first heard about Tracy Industries wanting pilots. She had immediately thought of Scott Tracy. She smiled to herself, remembering their conversation...

January 31st, 2068

"Hello?"

"Hi, I'd like to speak with Scott Tracy, if he's available, please?" Having tracked down a phone number through various ex-Air Force acquaintances, Elise had now plucked up the courage to call her Air Force friend. Granted they hadn't spent a lot of their Air Force careers together, but they'd formed a quick friendship during his stint as her training commander. Both of them had spent a long time in the Service and were very dedicated, serious pilots. Now she felt as nervous as a teenager calling a guy for a date!

"Hold on one moment please," the female voice on the other end replied. Elise waited.

"Hello, this is Scott Tracy speaking."

"Hi Scott! It's Elise Collins calling. Your 'air disaster in training' candidate!"

At the mention of this, Scott immediately knew who it was and started to chuckle. He wasn't likely to ever forget her 'near miss' with the Fireflash prototype during one of her training sessions! He'd given serious thought to changing his career after that.

"Elise! It's been a long time! How are you? What are you up to now?"

"I'm fine, I've been working as a CP flying helijets and executive aircraft, and very recently heard a rumor that your father's company was hiring, so I thought I'd look you up and see if it was true." She hoped she hadn't sounded desperate, and just merely curious.

"Well, what you heard is true, Elise. Dad's looking for a few good people to add on staff and that includes one or two pilots. Are you looking for a new pilot position, or did you just call me to see if I'd finally forgotten the Fireflash incident?" He couldn't hide the humor in his voice and she didn't miss it.

"Very funny, Scott! That was a technical error, not mine, and I only freaked out a little!" she laughed. "But now that you've mentioned my flying skills, I was actually looking for a new job." The silent pause made her nervous. Was I too pushy? Maybe I shouldn't have called, but I really need that job! Her thoughts were getting the better of her when Scott interrupted them.

"Elise? You still there?"

"What? Oh yes! Sorry, static on the line. What did you say Scott?"

"I was asking if you wanted me to put a good word in for you? We could really use your flying skills, Elise, and I know Dad would trust my opinion about you."

"If you could do that for me Scott, I would be so thankful." She continued on telling him about how bad things had gotten with Mr. Lyle, including her being stranded at O'Hare Airport. "So that's when I heard about Tracy Industries hiring."

"Look, why don't I have a word with Human Resources and Dad, and see what I can set up for you. Do you have a number so I can call you back?"

When Scott finally called back, Elise had grabbed the phone as if it was red hot! Scott advised her that he'd talked to Human Resources in the L.A. office and she had an interview the next morning. He'd also told her that if she did receive a job offer, she might have to move to New York, and move quickly. She told him it would not be a problem. So, early the next morning Elise found herself entering the L.A. offices of Tracy Industries, and being interviewed in a private office in the Human Resources Department. It seemed as if the interview took hours, covering everything from her high school grades, to her career in the Air Force, and her private Pilot's License. Mr. Rawlings, the interviewer, covered everything, her flying skills, responses to emergencies in the air, her personal life, hobbies; you name it, the man asked about it.

Mr. Rawlings stood up "Well, Ms Collins, thank you very much for coming in on such short notice.

I will pass this information on to my superiors and you should be hearing from us within 24 hours." He extended his hand and she graciously shook it.

"Thank you for your time, Mr. Rawlings." Smiling, she turned and left the office, and only when she'd reached the elevator to go down, did she let out the breath she'd been holding.

It was less than 24 hours later when her phone rang. Mr. Rawlings himself gave her the good news that she had been hired and was required to report to Tracy Industries Headquarters, New York, on Feb 6th. She then spent the next few days taking care of personal business, selling her car, packing her stuff and getting herself to New York. She'd done it in what she thought was world record time, and reported 2 days ago to Tracy Industries.

Bringing herself back to the present, she sipped her water and smiled. This had been the right thing to do. Calling Scott had definitely been worth the risk! Elise knew without a doubt that she was going to dedicate herself to being the best damn pilot Tracy Industries had ever hired. Looking around at the boxes strewn all over, she sighed and started to unpack.

Post by FrankieCTB2 on 06/06/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Sun, 22 Jul 2012 21:40:11 GMT
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Foxleyheath, 8th February 2068

After John had returned to Tracy Island. Lady Penelope took Kat's arm and led her back into the house.

"Now, I want to know all that happened."

"Well, you see... it's..." Kat began in a jumbled, excited manner.

"Let's have a cup of tea," Lady Penelope said, "and you can start from the beginning."

So, over tea, Kat told Lady Penelope all that had transpired.

"Oh, Lady Penelope, I was so embarrassed, I couldn't stop myself from yawning, but Mrs Tracy was so kind and insisted that I rest from my jet lag. I slept for three hours! Actually, I don't know how John managed to fly both ways, but there again I didn't see him until it was time for me to leave. He must have needed the rest."

Lady Penelope smiled. "I am sure that they wouldn't hold that against you."

"Oh no, in fact, Gordon told me that if Mrs Tracy thought I needed to rest, then that would be okay with her husband."

Kat continued. "The island and house are so beautiful, I do hope that Mr Tracy will accept me."

Then she looked guiltily at Lady Penelope. "Are you quite sure you don't mind me leaving you?"

"No not at all." Lady Penelope looked at Kat. "You know over the past four years, I have become very fond of you and see you as much as a friend as an employee." She added, more to herself than to Kat, "After all I never had a sister."

Kat smiled to herself when she remembered being introduced to Brains. She had gotten the impression that he had been expecting a male mechanic, and although he must have been put right on that point, did pass comment about how small she was. She had bit her tongue, not letting the all too familiar retort she had used over and over again slip out.

"The interview seemed to go very well. Mr Tracy put me at my ease immediately by calling me Kat," she continued. "I hope I made a favourable impression."

"Afterwards I was invited by the two youngest Tracy boys to see the games room. Tin-Tin and I were joined by Gordon and Virgil, and the rest of the day passed so quickly.

"Oh, one more thing, at breakfast before I was due to leave, there was another young woman there. She said her name was Callie. Do you think she was being interviewed for the same job?"

Lady Penelope shook her head. "I think Mr Tracy is looking to recruit quite a few extra staff."

Parker appeared in the Drawing Room. "There h'is a call for Miss Kat, from Tracy Island, your Ladyship."

Kat looked alarmed. So soon! Surely this must be bad news.

"Ms Williamson?" Jeff Tracy's voice crackled on the line.

"Yes?" whispered Kat.

"Ms Williamson, my wife and I have considered your application as a mechanic to the fleet of vehicles here on the island, and it is with great pleasure that I would like you to accept my offer of a job with us.

Kat silently punched the air and thought, Eureka!

Steadying her voice, Kat replied, "Mr Tracy, thank you for your offer, I am delighted to accept."

"Now that that is settled, I shall give you a short time to organise things from your point of view, and let your family know. I'll arrange for you to be brought out to the island in the not too distant future. Goodbye for now, Ms Williamson."

"One more thing, Mr Tracy, please call me Kat."

"Very well, Kat, we will see you again soon."

Kat rushed into the Drawing room and, flinging her arms around Lady Penelope, shouted, "I've

been accepted!"

"I am so very, very pleased for you. Now we must start arranging things; you will need plenty of summer clothes. What will you tell your parents?"

"Oh, that's easy, I shall just tell them that I have been offered a job by an American friend of yours. I am sure they will not question me too much, especially if I stress that you recommended me and say it is a promotion," Kat answered.

Lady Penelope agreed to help Kat buy some appropriate clothes. "You will need some lightweight overalls."

"Yes, and plenty of shorts and T-shirts. Do you suppose they dress formally at any time?"

"Yes, they do on occasion. I shall help you pick out some nice things," Lady Penelope told her.

Later that week, Kat phoned her parents. Her mother was delighted but her father wanted to know all about this mysterious employer.

Kat explained that he was an American who was building up his workforce and needed a mechanic. "Lady Penelope knows him well. I went for an interview and was offered the job."

"Well," her mother said, "if you are in America, you could contact your brother. I am sure he would like to see you."

Kat had to admit that she would not actually be in America, but on a small island.

"What does he need with a fleet of vehicles on an island?" Her father wanted to know.

"Dad, he and his family have to get places so he has a fleet of boats and planes at his disposal." Kat found herself at a loss for words. "Mum, Dad, I am going on an exciting new job at Lady Penelope's recommendation. She wouldn't recommend me to someone she didn't have the highest respect for, be happy for me."

"Kat, dear, of course we are happy for you, and as long as Lady Penelope is involved, then we are quite okay with it. Please keep in touch."

"I will. Love you both."

"We love you, too. By the way when are you leaving?"

"I am not sure, possibly within the next week or so."

"Take care, Kat."

"I will, bye for now."

Kat explained to Lady Penelope that that had been the hardest thing, trying to convince her

parents that her job was perfectly safe.

"After all, I know only that I am going to an island to work on vehicles, that must seem strange."

"I am sure everything will be fully explained once you are there," Lady Penelope replied. "Now when are we going to start shopping for you?"

Post by TawnyAngel22 on 06/06/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Sun, 22 Jul 2012 21:45:09 GMT
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The nurses' interviews were over, and Jeff took his place behind his desk in the lounge.. He turned to Dianne, who was seated on Thunderbird Three's sofa, her legs tucked up under her, sipping a glass of iced mint tea.

"What do you think, love?"

"I like them both. I want them both on staff. But they are suspicious. Nikki basically asked me how much work a doctor and two nurses would have at our home. A very pertinent question, I think. And since Dominic has a child... Jeff, I really think they need to see the true nature of what we're asking for."

Jeff sighed. "As loath as I am to admit it, you're right. They have the right to make this decision with their eyes wide open. I just sincerely hope that we can trust them to keep it to themselves should they turn down the opportunity."

"Me, too," Dianne agreed. "So... when do we tell them?"

"After dinner." Jeff replied. He looked at one of the data padds on his desk. "According to our job foreman, the Cliff House renovations should be done tomorrow." He consulted another, then looked over at his wife. "How do you think we should parcel out the new apartments? Let each choose their own? That might cause tension as some people wouldn't like what they got, or would have liked the opportunity to choose."

"How about draw the assignments out of a hat?" Dianne suggested. "Beyond that, my only thought would be to reserve one of the lower two bedroom apartments for Dominic. Let him choose which one. We're furnishing them, right?" At Jeff's nod, she continued. "Then offer them the option of bringing what they want of their own furnishings or ordering new."

"Interesting idea. I'll keep it in mind," Jeff said absently. Then he swore softly. "Oh no. I have to be in New York for three or four days the week after next. Damn, but this is bad timing! At least I should be able to finish up the interviews by then. We can start bringing people aboard late next week. Can you and Scott make the arrangements with Professor Spencer, and the two nurses, should they decide to take the opportunity? Get them out here and settled in?"

"Yes, we can. Will you be here for the birthdays?"

Jeff nodded. "Yes, love, I'll be here on the fourteenth for Gordon's birthday and for Alex's birthday as well. Is Gordon's Hawaiian luau ready to go? Are the plans ready for Alex's friends to come out for another sleepover?"

"Oh, yes in both cases. Kyrano says he's got all the food for the luau and we'll be having it on the little atoll about thirty miles northeast of here. Gordon says that's where the best surfing is on all of your islands. As for Alex, I sent the invitations three weeks ago and all but one mother has called to say her son or sons were coming. The boys think it's the best thing since sliced bread," Dianne replied with a chuckle.

Jeff smiled. "Good. I'm looking forward to it. Even if it does mean Operation: Cover Up."

Dianne got up from the couch and walked behind Jeff, wrapping her arms around him from behind. She nuzzled his ear with her lips and whispered, "And Ah'm lookin' forward to Valentine's Day."

Jeff reached up and took one of her hands, planting a kiss in the palm of it, then turning so his lips could reach hers.

"Who says we have to wait that long?" he asked softly, a mischievous twinkle in his blue eyes.

"Ahem."

At the very deliberate throat-clearing, the pair looked up to see an apron-bedecked Emily Tracy standing in the doorway to the study, hands on her hips and clutching a large spoon.

"If you two can keep your hands off of each other for a few minutes, dinner is ready. And we do have guests!" she said with mock sternness, shaking the spoon at them.

"We're coming, Mother," Jeff said, getting up from his seat and taking Dianne's hand. They brushed past Emily with a murmured, "Excuse us, Mother," from Jeff, and the old lady fell in behind him, grinning and still waving her spoon.

"Land's sakes, the way you two carry on! You'd think you were a couple of teenagers..." The pseudo-tirade went on as the threesome descended the stairs to the lower level and the dining room.

Post by Tikatu on 08/06/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Sun, 22 Jul 2012 21:50:34 GMT
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Brandon pulled into the parking lot at Tracy Industries. After the excitement of the weekend, he was more than ready to begin the morning's tests. He was walking to the main building,

acknowledging his friends, when a voice coming from behind him made him turn.

"McCain, will you slow down, please?" Dana Cruz hurried to catch up with Brandon.

"What do you want, Dana? I'm kind of in a hurry." Brandon started walking again and Dana was hard pressed to keep up.

"Mr. Belmont sent me to find you. He wants to see you in his office before you got busy."

Brandon frowned slightly. "Did he tell you why?"

Dana shook his head. "Sorry Brandon, he didn't."

"Thanks for telling me. I'll head there now."

Eugene Belmont sat at his desk, looking over the day's schedule and thinking about a phone call he had received earlier. The caller had mentioned Brandon and his hard work and dedication to his job. He listened a little more, then Belmont smiled. "Thank you. I'll inform Mr. McCain immediately." He hung up, calling Dana to him and sending him after Brandon.

Brandon walked towards Belmont's office, his steps echoing in the now empty hallway, wondering what his supervisor wanted with him.

Well, I guess I'm going to find out. Brandon thought as he approached Belmont's office and knocked on the door.

"Come in."

Brandon entered the office. "You wanted to see me, sir?"

"Yes, I did. Please, sit down." Brandon sat down and Mr. Belmont began his explanation. "It seems someone has been admiring your drive and dedication." Brandon gave him an inquisitive look, prompting him to continue.

"I received a phone call earlier this morning. It seems that Mr. Tracy has gotten word of your hard work and has decided that you're ready for a bigger challenge."

Brandon's eyes grew wide in surprise. "You're kidding! Jeff Tracy, the head honcho of the company, wants to promote me?"

"Yes, he does. You're to meet his representative Thursday morning." Mr. Belmont pushed a piece of paper across his desk. "Here's the location and the time."

Brandon looked at the paper, stunned. Then he turned his eyes to his boss. "Thank you, sir."

"You're welcome, McCain. And good luck."

Brandon paced in front of hangar ten. The note had said for him to be there at 8 am sharp. Here it was, almost eight-thirty and there was no sign of the representative. He looked at his watch in disgust and was about to leave when he heard a voice call out to him.

"I'm sorry I'm late, Mr. McCain. I was delayed by a storm that blew in off the coast." Brandon watched as a man with dark brown hair and blue eyes strode over to him.

"I'd just about given up on you Mister..." Brandon replied, giving the newcomer a once over.

"Tracy. Scott Tracy." Scott held out a hand and Brandon shook it firmly.

"Well, Mr. Tracy, what can I do for you?"

Scott smiled. "More to the point, what can I do for you? My father has taken a hard look at your record and feels that a promotion is in order."

"What kind of promotion?"

"The type of promotion that would make good use of your talents."

Brandon stood silently, thinking about what Scott had told him. I find it hard to believe that Mr. Tracy singled me out for a promotion. There are others more qualified than I am. I wonder what the catch is. "Why would your father be interested in me? There are others that have been here longer than I have."

"True, but none have the qualifications we're looking for. You do."

Brandon looked at Scott keenly, and then came to a decision.

"It all sounds great, but, if it's possible, I'd like to talk to Mr. Tracy about this promotion. I'd need to know what my duties would be if I took the job." Brandon paused a moment, then spoke again. "So, when can we go talk to the boss?"

Scott grinned at him, a white smile with a touch of mischievousness about it. "No time like the present."

"Now?"

"Yeah. Now."

Within the hour they were airborne. Brandon leaned back in his seat, thinking of what was to come. He looked out the window and realized they were over open water, with no land in sight.

"Hey, where are we going? This isn't the route to Kansas."

Scott glanced over at him, raising an eyebrow and with a bit of a smile on his lips. "You're right. It's not." He turned back to piloting. "Despite what you may have heard, the Tracy family doesn't

live in Kansas."

"If we aren't going to Kansas, may I ask where we ARE going?"

"To our home. On an island in the South Pacific," Scott replied.

Brandon stared at the back of Scott's head. "All I can say is you guys sure do like your privacy."

"You don't know how much," Scott muttered under his breath, too soft for Brandon to hear.

Brandon leaned back, listening to the hum of the plane's engine and thinking.

On one hand, this could be a major boost to my career. Then again, I have no idea what I'm getting into. I just hope I don't regret it.

Post by MagicMaster8 on 08/06/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out

Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Sun, 22 Jul 2012 21:53:21 GMT

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Both nurses sat nervously across from Jeff and Dianne. This was it. This would determine which one of them would work there or if both of them had been accepted.

"First of all, I want to thank you both for being so willing to come here and interview," Jeff began. "I know you had to take time from your work schedules, and for you Dominic, it meant bringing Joshua along, something that you may have found logistically difficult. I... we appreciate your time and effort."

"Bringing Josh has not been a problem, Mr. Tracy," Dominic responded. "Your daughter has been wonderful with him."

"I'm glad to hear it," said Dianne with a smile. "And I hope you've both enjoyed your stay here on our Island."

"Oh, yes, Dr. Tracy!" Nikki gushed. "I shall hate going back to cold, wet England after all the tropical sun and the beaches. I feel like I've had a vacation!"

All four laughed at her statement, and somehow the ice was broken a little.

"I'd be sorry to be going back to cold, wet weather, too," Jeff agreed. "But it's not all sunshine and warmth here. Wait until monsoon season!"

When the chuckles had died down from his quip, the Tracys grew serious.

"On the way here, Nikki asked a very pertinent question, one that I'm sure you've both asked yourselves as you've toured our home and seen our sick room and its equipment," Dianne began.

"How much work can there really be for a doctor and one or two nurses? And why do we need such advanced equipment?" She leaned forward and gazed back and forth between them, catching each nurse's eye. "The answer is something that we hold very close and secret. Yet, we want to be upfront with you about everything you'd be signing on for. Especially you, Dominic, since your decision would affect not only you, but Joshua."

"Does this mean that we've been accepted?" Nikki asked.

Jeff nodded. "Yes. We are offering both of you a job of nurse to the Tracy family. But, there's a more important job involved and you need to know about it before you make a decision."

"I'm not so sure about this, Mr. Tracy. Do you keep secrets from all of your family's staff?" Dominic asked, suspicious.

"I made the mistake of trying to keep it from my wife when she first came. It's not a mistake I care to repeat."

Dianne added, "What we are about to show you must remain here. You must never tell anyone else about it." She rose, as did Jeff. "Please, follow us."

Nikki and Dominic looked at each other again as they got up and followed their host and hostess. Down a flight of stairs to the lower level, around a corner and past the sick room, around another corner to where the corridor dead-ended. Jeff pressed a hidden button on the wall, and a small control panel opened. He placed his palm on the panel and it was scanned, then a red light below the scanner turned green. He pressed a series of buttons, and a portion of the wall slid away.

"This is a lift to a monorail system that runs through the complex in the rock beneath our home," he explained as he opened the door to the lift and they all got inside. Nikki was getting more and more nervous about the situation, and Dianne gave her a reassuring smile. Dominic stayed cool, but inside, his suspicions were growing.

The lift deposited them in a small, plain, but well-lit room hewn from the rock. The walls were as smooth as if they had been poured concrete and it was clean and dust free. A red monorail car waited for them. Jeff indicated that they should all step inside, and he took the controls, letting the monorail make its way through a wide, well-lit tunnel.

"Must cost a pretty penny to light all this," Dominic said as he looked around.

"We have our own power generators," Jeff explained. "As well as our own desalination equipment and sewage treatment plant. We're really quite self-contained."

The monorail track rounded a bend, but Jeff stopped the car and they all disembarked. Another lift took them to the floor of a massive room. Nikki's eyes widened at the size of it, but Dominic's eyes were drawn to the huge green machine that stood on stilts and dominated the room. He gave a low whistle.

Dianne led the way over to the green monster. The two nurses could see that sitting on the floor, its very top fitting neatly between the front and back of the big machine, was a garage-like

structure, flat on the bottom and rounded like an ancient Quonset hut. A flap door was open, and inside the garage was a gleaming white vehicle.

"It looks like an ambulance," Nikki breathed. "But the biggest ambulance I've ever seen!"

Dianne smiled slightly. "In a way, it is an ambulance. This is Thunderbird Seven, the newest vehicle in the Thunderbird fleet...."

Dominic jumped as if stung and his face paled. "Thunderbird? Thunderbirds? As in... International Rescue Thunderbirds?"

Jeff nodded solemnly, and Nikki gasped, putting a hand up to her lips. "Yes, Dominic, Nikki. International Rescue Thunderbirds. Our family is International Rescue."

"And... we are asking you both to join us," Dianne added softly.

Post by Tikatu on 09/06/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Sun, 22 Jul 2012 22:00:11 GMT
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Thursday, February 9, 2:30 p.m. Tracy Industries Hangar, Heathrow Airport.

Christopher sipped at his tea, and nervously looked at his watch again.

"Come on," he muttered, "this is only the owner and big man of the company you work for. How bad could it be?" He sipped again, squinting to see a dot in the sky. "I'm not sure."

Tin-Tin asked for clearance to land from Heathrow Control. Her Ladybird jet had made the trip from the Island in good time.

Hmm. Christopher Jordan. A pilot. I hope he'll be capable of handling Thunderbird One.

Christopher watched the dot get larger, and he soon saw that it was one of the newer TI Ladybird jets. He'd always wanted to fly one. Finishing his tea, he picked up his bag and wandered closer to see the plane land.

Tin-Tin taxied her jet towards the Tracy Industries' hangar. There was a man waiting on the tarmac, a bag beside him.

That must be Mr. Jordan. I'll need to refuel and freshen up before we return. I hope he can be patient; he looks raring to go!

Christopher watched as the jet taxied to a standstill.

"Very nice," he said to himself, "very nice indeed." The nervousness that he had since earlier that

morning was receding slightly, but it was still there. He waited for the pilot to emerge.

Tin-Tin opened the pilot's door and clambered out, trying to look graceful as she did. She noticed the man's eyes roving up and down the fuselage of the plane in an admiring way. Then their eyes met, and he shuffled his feet a bit.

"Hello," she said, approaching with hand outstretched. "I am Tin-Tin Kyrano."

Christopher took the proffered hand. Her grip was firm. "I'm Christopher," he said, "Christopher Jordan. Very pleased to meet you."

"I like your jet." He smiled. "A Ladybird isn't it? I've never flown one of those."

Tin-Tin smiled back. "Thank you very much. Yes, she's a Ladybird. Handles like a dream." She paused. "Do you have the printout of your email for me?"

Christopher rifled in his bag and pulled out a slightly crumpled piece of paper. He handed it to Tin-Tin. "There you go. Anything I can do for you?"

"No, not at the moment. Let's get your bag stowed. I need to get this baby refueled and freshen up a bit myself before we fly out of here," Tin-Tin explained, stretching.

"That's okay." Christopher smiled his widest smile. "Would you like a tea?"

"Actually, I would like some tea. Where can we get some around here? Does the hangar have a snack room? Or will we have to truck back to the main terminal?" Tin-Tin asked. "I've not been out to the Heathrow hangar often. Usually when we fly into England, we land at a friend's airstrip."

"Well," Christopher said, pointing the way to the TI lounge, "we have some top notch catering facilities. Follow me," he said. "We have a shower with fresh towels, too. I remember that Mr Tracy got that put in."

Tin-Tin chuckled. "I should have realized that Mr. Tracy would have his hangars fully equipped for the comfort of his executives."

"He did that for his on-call pilots, too," Christopher grinned as he opened the door into the lounge. He made some tea while Tin-Tin was freshening up.

When Tin-Tin had washed her face and used the comfortable facilities, she accepted a cup of tea from Christopher and sipped it. "Very good. You make very good tea. Almost as good as my father does."

"I cannot take all the credit for that tea." Christopher grinned. "I had some help from PG Tips."

Christopher looked at Tin-Tin intently. "You are a excellent pilot, like my girlfriend"

"It must be nice to have a shared interest in a relationship," Tin-Tin said with a touch of wistfulness. "Are you and the lady engaged?"

"Not yet," Christopher sighed. "Although I'm going to try and pop the question soon. Anna is very busy; she flies those next generation passenger jets."

"Oh, then she is very skilled to handle those planes," Tin-Tin commented, still sipping her tea and picking up a pastry as well. Have to watch the waistline, but one pastry won't hurt. I'll need the sugar energy on the way back.

"Yes, considering she was a model before she retrained." Christopher chuckled. "What do you do in the Tracy set-up?"

"Me? Oh, I'm an engineer. Technical assistant to the head engineer, really. And a fill-in pilot when the family needs one," Tin-Tin said modestly. "You said your girlfriend was a model? I have a friend who has done some modeling. Who did your girlfriend model for?"

"She was on the cover of Vogue 4 years ago," Christopher said after some thought, "and she modeled for Francesco Pierria. Her name is Anna Marchant."

"Oh! I remember Anna. She modeled for François Lemaire as well, didn't she? My friend modeled for him."

"We have some things in common, then," Christopher said. "Well, I'm ready to go. I'm nervous enough as it is, meeting the head of the company."

Tin-Tin finished her tea and wiped her hands to remove the stickiness of the pastry. "I'm ready to go, too. The plane should be refueled by now and I can do a quick preflight check, then we'll be off." She smiled at him. "You really don't need to be nervous. Mr. Tracy doesn't bite."

"Thanks," Christopher said. "Although I do remember meeting Scott Tracy once when he was in the USAF. He was over here to give the new RAF strike fighters the once over. He was an imposing figure."

Tin-Tin laughed. "Don't tell him that, he'd never live it down! His brothers would tease him mercilessly. Well, shall we go?"

"Certainly." Christopher stood up, holding out a hand for Tin-Tin, "After you."

Hmm. An officer and a gentleman, Tin-Tin thought. He's a refreshing change from the full-of-themselves fly boys I normally meet... one in particular.

Christopher followed Tin-Tin out to where the jet was sitting, and helped her board. "Where shall I sit?"

"You can take the copilot's seat so we can chat some more," Tin-Tin said as she signed the security officer's data padd.

Christopher looked surprised. "Thank you!" He eased himself into the co-pilot seat and whistled to himself as he gazed at all the new technology in front of him. "You know," he mused, "I've never

been to Kansas before."

"Oh, we're not going to Kansas," Tin-Tin said with a twinkle in her eye.

"Pardon?" Christopher looked perplexed. "Then where are we going?"

"You'll see very soon," Tin-Tin answered with a grin as she asked for take-off clearance from Heathrow Control.

Post by TheWrongTrousers and Tikatu on 09/06/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out

Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Sun, 22 Jul 2012 22:02:51 GMT

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Date: February 9, 2068 Time: About 7:30 p.m. Eastern Standard

Callie sat at home, pondering about what she had done in the past few days, starting with the report she received from International Rescue.

*****February 6, 9 a.m.*****

Callie knocked on the door of Colonel Seese's office.

"Enter."

She walked into the office and said, "Sir, I think this report will tell everything."

Seese noticed a folder in her hand. He took the envelope and opened it to read the contents. "This is the information, all right, but...how did you get it from International Rescue?"

"They were also working on the superfertilizer mystery. The dicetyline they used in the rescue mixed with the Cruiser's fuel to create the mutated plants. The good news is that they have become more aware of the situation to make sure this doesn't happen again." She started fidgeting. "There's something else I need to tell you. I...I've accepted a job at Tracy Industries. They're in need of a specialist in communications and environmental engineering, and someone recommended me. I had a chance to meet Jeff Tracy himself, and he said he needs all the help he can get with the expanding business."

The colonel was surprised. "This is quite a shocking move. What made you take the job so quickly?"

"Because I can use my knowledge in a proactive manner instead of reactive--work out problems before they occur."

"Will you have an opportunity to use your skills as an astronaut? You have put much time and effort into that training."

"I know, sir. Perhaps one day Mr. Tracy will have an opening in his aerospace division for me. Until then, I'm looking forward to this new endeavor."

"It won't be the same without you, Professor. How much longer will you stay with the WSA?"

"I'm going to turn in my two-week notice to my supervisor here at Cape Canaveral as soon as I leave. It has been an honor working for the WSA, but it's time for a new challenge in my life."

*****Present Time*****

Callie had given her supervisor the notice and gone home. She was instructed to wait for another telephone call from Jeff.

Then, the phone rang. "Hello?"

"Professor Spencer?" said Jeff.

"Hello, Mr. Tracy. You received my message?"

"Yes. I'm looking forward to you coming here. When can you make it?"

"In less than two weeks. I had to give my notice."

"That's fine. The apartments should be completed today."

"I'm excited about this chance, Mr. Tracy."

"We're all excited here, Professor. We're all looking forward to your arrival here on Tracy Island."

"You should've seen how excited my family was when they learned I was going to work for Tracy Industries."

"Will you have a chance to see your family before you come out here?"

"Yes. I'm going to Opp this weekend. They want to see me before I go."

"Terrific. Spend some quality time with your family, and we'll be in touch."

"Thank you, Mr. Tracy." She hung up the phone and started planning her weekend trip to her hometown to visit her family.

Post by TracyFan4Ever on 10/06/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Sun, 22 Jul 2012 22:30:58 GMT

"International Rescue?" Dominic squeaked. He knew he was losing composure, but to be honest, he didn't give a damn. "International Rescue. Holy bejasus, I was not expecting that."

He turned to Nikki, who was looking equally shocked. Jeff and Dianne stood stoic and expectant, waiting for their answers. Dominic took a moment to relax, and thought. International Rescue! How long had he envied their skills, their equipment? How many times had he wondered what it would be like to help them? Of course he would accept; it was like a dream come true!

But no. Joshua... He could never bring a child into a world like this. International Rescue dealt with life-threatening situations. He did not want anyone to have to tell Josh that his daddy had died. He had already lost his mother, in a way. But... It wasn't like that was even going to happen, was it? He had been with LifeFlight for years, and he was fine.

Dominic closed his eyes briefly, blocking out the massive green machine. Joshua would need to be looked after when he was away. He would need pre-schooling. He would need friends. Was it really fair to bring the child away to a tropical island? Was it? Dom turned to the two waiting Tracys.

"I would be honoured to join your operation." He said. Both looked delighted. "But..." Their faces fell. "I don't know if it's fair on my son. I can't afford to let anything happen to me; I'm the only one he's got. And he needs care, attention, friends, education... I don't know if it's feasible to take him away."

Dianne smiled gently.

"I had the same feelings when I was offered the job. I had three kids; but what right did I have to take them away from their home? Well, I can assure you, Joshua will be well taken care of. I know everyone will lend a hand, and as far as companionship and education go, he can get that here. International Rescue is not just an organisation, but is also a family. We bind together, we help each other out."

"If you decide to join us," Jeff added, "Joshua will get all the care he needs. There's no need to worry about that."

Dominic was silent for a few moments, contemplating. Then, finally, he allowed a grin to cross his face.

"Then I accept."

Post by ArtisticRainey on 11/06/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Sun, 22 Jul 2012 22:32:57 GMT
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Nikki looked at Thunderbird 2 and the vehicle that the pod housed.

I can't believe this family is International Rescue and I have the chance to work with them, she thought.

Nikki heard Dominic give his answer and guessed that she would soon have to give hers too.

If I do join International Rescue, it would mean leading a secret life and lying to my friends and family about it. How normal would my life be if I do work with them? Nikki thought back to the job she had back home.

She was always in the hospital waiting for the patients so that she could help treat them, never out in the field. This was definitely going to be different.

Nikki looked at the waiting Jeff and Dianne. "Does my boss, Dr Lierman really know about International Rescue or does he think that I'm applying for a job at Tracy Industries?"

"He doesn't know about International Rescue. Dr Lierman, along with your family and friends would think that you're applying for a position at Tracy Industries and if you decide to join, they would think that you are working for the company," Jeff answered.

Nikki nodded and thought for a while. She soon smiled and looked at Jeff and Dianne once again. "Like Dominic, I am also honoured to join International Rescue."

Post by Nikki-browneyes1 on 11/06/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Sun, 22 Jul 2012 23:43:47 GMT
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Brandon awoke to a change in the pitch of the plane's engines. Looking out the window, he saw a small dot of land, increasing in size as the aircraft descended towards it.

"Tracy One to Tracy Island, requesting permission to land." Brandon heard Scott ask, and sat up straight, checking his safety belts for landing.

"Permission denied, Tracy One," came a deep voice. "The last of the cargo VTOLs is lifting off now. Continue in holding pattern until further notice."

"Well, what do you know about that!" Scott exclaimed quietly.

Brandon watched in fascination as, one by one, the VTOLs lifted off. After the last of them had left, Tracy One was given permission to land.

Scott brought the plane in for a smooth landing, taxiing to a concrete path that led to a house barely visible from the tarmac. An older Asian man, wearing a silk tunic with matching trousers, waited for them with a small hovercar.

"Kyrano, this is Brandon McCain. Mr. McCain, meet Kyrano, our family retainer and the one person who keeps our household running."

Kyrano bowed. "It is a pleasure to meet you, Mr. McCain. I will bring your luggage and transport you to the Villa."

"It's a pleasure to meet you too, Kyrano," Brandon replied, returning the bow.

After loading the luggage into the hovercar, Kyrano drove them to the Villa. Brandon took in every detail that he could, his eyes like that of a hawk.

The hovercar came to a stop at the bottom of a long stairway. At the base of the stairs, two men waited. Both were well-built, strong looking men, and there was a definite family resemblance. The elder had silvery salt-and-pepper hair, and the younger's hair was a coppery red. As Brandon approached, the older man held out his hand.

"Welcome to Tracy Island, Mr. McCain," he said, the deep voice the same that had greeted Scott on the radio.

"Thank you, Mr. Tracy," Brandon said, taking his hand. He recognized the older man of course; after all, he worked for him.

After Jeff introduced Gordon, Brandon asked a legitimate question. "I consider it an honor to meet you and to be considered for a promotion. One thing bothers me, though. Why bring me all the way out here for a promotion? We could have done it at Tracy Industries just as easily."

Gordon stood by, listening to Brandon's question. Straight and to the point, he thought.

"An excellent question, Mr. McCain. Let's go in and discuss this in a bit more comfortable setting," Jeff said as he led the way up to the lounge.

Brandon looked from side to side as he climbed the stairs. He saw Jeff wave to two women and three children who were splashing in the pool that they passed as they climbed. Then they were inside the cool, comfortable lounge. There were several sofas and chairs and on the wall was a series of portraits of six young men, a young woman, a teenaged girl, and two boys.

"My children, our chief engineer, Brains, and his assistant, Tin-Tin," Jeff said as he waved towards the pictures and sat behind his desk.

Brandon took a seat in front of Jeff. "Nice family. But it doesn't explain why you brought me here. There's got to be more to it than just a promotion."

Jeff chuckled as he sat back in his chair. "You're a very direct man, Mr. McCain. Sometimes that can be a good thing; sometimes you need to demand answers. But there are times when it's better to wait until your answers are revealed to you." Brandon could not mistake the slight warning tone in Jeff's voice, and he sat back, trying to relax and contain his questions. Jeff continued. "You and my son Gordon have something in common. You've both served in WASP."

Brandon was intrigued by this little bit of information. "That's interesting. Who did you serve under?" he asked Gordon.

"Thomas Marshall," Gordon replied. "I was stationed in Honolulu."

"Thomas Marshall. I heard of him but never served under him. I was stationed in San Diego and served under John Shore."

"What craft did you deal with? I dealt mostly with subaqua craft and only occasionally with the surface boats and all," Gordon asked.

"I served aboard the Tigershark for four years. After that I transferred to the Rescue Patrol as a hydrofoil pilot. Spent several years working with the Rescue patrol. When Tracy Industries was in need of someone to test their new marine designs, I applied for the job."

"What part of WASP did you enjoy working in the most? Underwater, sea level, or rescue?" Gordon asked. Brandon began to get the impression that it wasn't the older Tracy that was interviewing him, but the younger one.

"Honestly, it was the rescue part of the job that I enjoyed the most. There was something satisfying about getting out and helping people who were in dire situations."

"Hmm. Good." Gordon looked over at his father, and nodded.

"Gordon, why don't you take Mr. McCain on a tour of our facilities? Let me know when you're near the end," Jeff said.

Sure, Dad," Gordon said, rising.

Gordon started by showing Brandon around the Villa. He was impressed by what he saw. Looks like they have every thing they need here to be self-supporting. Brandon thought as Gordon continued the tour.

After touring the Villa, the two men took the monorail to the boat pen. Here the family yacht, the Lucille was kept.

"Whoa, I am impressed," Brandon said, letting out a low whistle. He walked around all sides of the yacht, taking in its sleek hull.

"Yeah, she's a beaut all right. Dad named her after my late mother," Gordon explained. "Now he's remarried. Some of us call her Mom, even if she isn't." He looked at his watch and then pressed a button. "Come on. I've got something really impressive to show you."

More impressive than that yacht? Brandon wondered as Gordon led him back to the monorail. It must be really something then.

Gordon guided the monorail through a tunnel that curved around a sharp bend. In the headlights,

Brandon could see a branch line leading off somewhere. Then they came out into a massive room.

As he looked down, Brandon saw small bays with interesting machines sitting in them. A bulldozer with a cannon in the middle of the blade?

Brandon looked down and just caught a glimpse of two green containers at the far end of the room before they entered another tunnel. What kind of place is Mr. Tracy maintaining here?

Gordon brought the monorail car to a halt behind another one. Jeff stood on a platform waiting for them.

"So, Mr. McCain. What do you think so far?"

"I'm impressed, Mr. Tracy. What I've seen so far is fantastic. It's like nothing I've ever seen."

"Well, the best is yet to come, as they say." And with that, Jeff turned and led Brandon down to the floor of another massive room. Gordon brought up the rear.

When they came out from between two of the large green structures, Gordon took the lead. Smiling, he brought Brandon up to the open door of what looked like a huge garage. Inside was a bright yellow craft. "A mini-submersible!" Brandon exclaimed.

Brandon walked up to the craft, taking in its every detail from front to back. When he reached the back of the sub, he noticed the number four on the fin and 'THUNDERBIRD 4' in large letters on each side. It was then that the realization hit him.

"You guys are a part of International Rescue."

"Not part of," Gordon said, a touch of pride in his voice. "We ARE International Rescue."

"Yes," Jeff said, coming up the ramp into the pod. "And you were quite right, Mr. McCain, when you said that your visit here was about more than a promotion. We find ourselves in need of another aquanaut. You are our first choice. We'd like you to join us."

Brandon looked, first at Gordon then Jeff, a look of shock on his face. "This is an honor, Mr. Tracy, but it's so sudden. How soon do you need my decision?"

Father and son looked at each other. It was obvious that they hadn't thought about it.

"A week," Jeff finally said. "We're recruiting others and we want training to begin as soon as possible. If you can give us your answer within the week, then we can bring you on board with the other new recruits."

"Okay Mr. Tracy, a week it is. I'll let you know my choice then."

"In the meantime, feel free to enjoy our hospitality for the rest of the day. Scott will fly you back to San Diego tomorrow," Jeff said. "And don't worry about your work hours. I'll see to it that you're

compensated for your time here." With that he strode out, leaving Brandon alone with Gordon.

After Jeff had left, Brandon looked at Gordon, shaking his head. "What other secrets do you have hiding here?" Brandon was still in shock over what he had discovered about the Tracy family.

"All kinds of secrets," Gordon said with a grin. "But you don't get to see them if you're not part of the team. Letting this cat out of the bag is enough." He cocked his head at Brandon. "You up for some diving? We have some great sea caves and coral reefs."

Brandon grinned back at him. "You bet I am. Let's go."

Post by MagicMaster8 and Tikatu on 13/06/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Sun, 22 Jul 2012 23:46:30 GMT
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Thursday 09 February. 09.37pm. Apartment 12a, Sunshine Mews. Kansas.

Dominic grabbed his work tunic from the bed and quickly slipped it on over his trousers, and sat down to hastily put on his white safety shoes. Stupid jet lag, he groaned internally. It had been the early hours of the morning when he had arrived back in Kansas, and he had only gotten to sleep a few hours before. And now I have to get to work! He glanced at his watch. Pronto!

There had been a lot of explaining to do to Tom, the half-brother he lived with. It had not been easy telling him that he and Joshua would be leaving in a few weeks. Tom had shook his head and sighed resignedly.

"I could make millions if I put your story on paper. Jumping around from place to place, country to country. Thrill seeking, never able to stay still... Look, take care of yourself. I don't like the idea of you being so far away from...everything."

"Relax, Tom. I'm only going as a family nurse. How hard can it be? And they're lovely people. Chill, Tommy, I'll be grand."

Then, of course, he had informed his father he had gotten the job. When was he leaving, his father had asked. Dominic had liaised with Mr Tracy, and they had set the date as Friday 24th February. That was the day whenever he would shake off life in Kansas and join the skilled members of International Rescue. Dom only hoped that he would be up to the challenge.

He did a mental tally; tunic, trousers, shoes, hair neat(ish), knee and elbow pads, helmet, bike chain. Yes, he was ready to go. He went in to kiss his sleeping son goodnight before calling a goodbye to Tom, and left the apartment. It wouldn't do to be late on the day he was handing in his two weeks' notice.

Post by ArtisticRainey on 13/06/2004

Foxleyheath, England, February 2068

Kat arrived for work following a short stay with her parents. Although her father and mother must have wanted to ask her a million questions, they had both told her that as long as Lady Penelope had recommended her, they were perfectly happy with everything. While she had been there she had collected a few personal things, which had been left behind when she had moved to Foxleyheath.

Once back at Foxleyheath there were two things she had to attend to: one was to give FAB1 a final check over and the other, to meet the new mechanic friend of Parker's and show him around.

She had just nicely finished her checklist on the vehicle and, satisfied that everything was completely okay, waited for Parker to arrive.

While she waited she thought of everything that had happened so far this year. Lady Penelope recommending her for a job with the Tracy family on their Pacific Island. She still could not understand why a family on an island needed her, and so many other people, to work for them. She was very curious, the more so, because every time she asked Lady Penelope questions, all that she had said was that everything would be explained when she was on the island.

Her thoughts were interrupted by footsteps coming into the garage. Kat got up from her seat on an upturned box and went to meet the two men.

"Miss Kat, may h'I h'introduce my very good friend Jimmy 'Lofty' h'Atkinson."

Kat grinned to herself. Standing alongside Parker was a man not much taller than herself. He was in his fifties with a weather-beaten face and blue twinkly eyes.

"Ever so pleased to meet you," he said giving her a small bow and shaking her hand.

For some unknown reason Kat took a liking to him. "Pleased to meet you, too, Mr Atkinson."

"Oh, please, call me Lofty."

Kat inwardly thought that Lady Penelope would have her work cut out with these two characters.

"You have worked on Rolls before, Lofty?" Kat enquired.

"Oh, yes miss, that was my main work before I was sent to prison."

"He shouldn't 'ave been sent down," Parker informed her. "'E was wrongly h'accused."

Kat nearly said, "They all say that," but bit her lip. He looked honest enough and maybe he was innocent.

Kat showed him around the garage, showing him where everything was kept. By the questions he was asking, he certainly knew enough to convince her that Lady Penelope's car would be in safe hands with him.

Kat left the two of them to go into the kitchen and have some lunch with Lil and made her way to report to Lady Penelope.

Over coffee, Kat had Lady Penelope in giggles over Lofty. She described to her employer that he was Lofty by name but not in stature.

She mimicked the conversation between the three of them, sending Lady Penelope into further fits of giggles.

"You are so good at imitating people. Please don't get into trouble when you are on Tracy Island."

"I won't imitate anyone until maybe I get to know them well enough," Kat assured her. "I think he will be a good mechanic, but I think you will have your work cut out with another character similar to Parker."

Lady Penelope agreed, but added that as Parker had recommended him, and she trusted Parker's judgement, so she was sure that they would all get on okay.

Kat walked over to the window and looked at the English countryside. It was cold with a drizzly rain falling. Just think soon she would not see England again, and if she did, it would not be for a long time. Suddenly she felt slightly homesick. She had never been far away from her parents before; she was going to miss them.

Lady Penelope noted Kat's silence. "Is everything okay, my dear?"

"Oh yes, Lady Penelope. I was just thinking what a change my life is taking."

"No second thoughts?"

"None at all, just a slight sadness at leaving my parents. Although I haven't lived at home for quite a while, they have always been there for me. I could talk about anything to them, especially to my father. Now I feel slightly deceitful. They were so restrained when I visited them. I know they would like more reassurances than I could give, but they did seem satisfied that you are involved."

"Never mind," Lady Penelope said, "I am sure that in time you will be able to tell them a little more."

Post by Tawnyangel22 on 14/06/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Mon, 23 Jul 2012 00:02:47 GMT
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Tracy Island. 7.55am. 9th February

Christopher yawned as he splashed his face with cold water. He looked up into the mirror and groaned.

"I look awful!" he muttered as he dried his face. Stepping out of the bathroom, he saw the view that he still couldn't believe: a tropical paradise.

The flight over had been fun. Tin-Tin was charming, vivacious, and attractive. He liked talking to her. After a while in the air, he had managed to cajole her into singing songs with him. Strangely enough, it made him miss Anna more than ever.

Putting on his RAF blazer and straightening his tie, he stepped out into the air conditioned corridor and looked around. Humming a long forgotten tune to himself, he made his way to where Tin-Tin had told him where the dining room was.

He entered a room full of activity.

"Ah! Mr Jordan, welcome. Please come sit over here," Jeff called, indicating a seat to his left. When they had arrived at the Island, Tin-Tin had told him that the family was just getting up and that he would see his employer at breakfast.

Christopher sat down in the offered chair. "Thank you, Mr. Tracy. You don't know how honoured I am to meet you."

"The pleasure's all ours, Mr. Jordan. Let me introduce you to my wife, Dianne. This is another guest, Brandon McCain..." Jeff went around the table, introducing Brains and the rest of the family.

Christopher smiled shyly as he looked around the table. There were so many people there. He remembered Scott from the RAF visit. He picked up his fork and speared a piece of bacon.

"I was very surprised to receive your email, Mr Tracy," Christopher said. "I think everyone is surprised to receive something from the owner of the company."

"I hope it was surprise and not shock, Mr. Jordan," Jeff said amiably. "I think Mr. McCain was just as surprised to hear from me."

"Yes, sir. I must admit I was," Brandon replied with a slight smile.

"I'm looking forward to finding out exactly why I'm here." Christopher finished his glass of orange juice. He felt a bit more awake than before. He looked over at Tin-Tin and smiled. He was glad to have another chance to talk to her again. She saw him and smiled back.

"Tin-Tin?" Christopher leaned closer to her. "I wonder if you'd like to show me round some places when you have the time."

"Certainly, Christopher," Tin-Tin replied with a dazzling smile. "You might want to rest a bit, first

though. The jet lag can be horrendous." She looked towards Jeff. "Mr. Tracy? Would you mind if I gave Mr. Jordan a tour of the Villa when he's ready?"

"Not at all, Tin-Tin," Jeff replied.

"I feel okay now," Christopher said, "but whenever you're ready, Tin-Tin." He noticed some of the other Tracy boys, namely Gordon and John, stealing glances in his direction.

The conversation swirled around, touching on many topics. Christopher and Tin-Tin chatted animatedly together. That is, until something Brandon said caught Christopher's ear.

"Yeah, I've seen the new yacht that the US is entering in the America's Cup. The Brits and the Aussies don't have a chance," he stated with satisfaction.

Christopher's face whipped round to look at Brandon, his mouth set in a firm line and his eyes flashing with anger. But his voice was calm.

"At least our World Cup side didn't get knocked out by a team from Fiji," he said, a hint of mockery in his voice, "Five nil, wasn't it?"

Brandon looked at him, surprised. "Was it? I wouldn't know. I don't follow soccer."

This little argument didn't escape Jeff. He glanced at Dianne, who raised an eyebrow at him.

Christopher glared at Brandon for a moment before getting up from the table.

"I'm ready to go now," Christopher said. "Mr. and Mrs. Tracy, thank you for a wonderful breakfast."

"If you'll excuse us, please," Tin-Tin said as she rose. "I'll take Mr. Jordan on that tour."

"You're welcome, Mr. Jordan," Dianne said.

"Tin-Tin, let me know when you and Mr. Jordan are finished and bring him to the study, please," Jeff instructed.

"Yes, Mr. Tracy," Tin-Tin agreed. She turned to Christopher. "If you'll come with me?"

"Certainly," Christopher said. "After you."

Christopher was amazed at the beautiful island. The white beaches, the tropical flora, the luxurious Villa with its pool and many amenities all dazzled him. He looked at the wheeling birds, and took a deep breath. Now was the time to go and talk to his boss.

Tin-Tin led him through the lounge, with its casual portraits of the Tracy offspring as well as Brains and Tin-Tin and into the study, where both Jeff and Scott waited for him.

"I'm agog!" Christopher said with a grin, "This is an incredible place!"

"We like it," Jeff replied with a smile. "Please, sit down."

Christopher sat down; his nervousness had returned a little.

"I hope I have come up to your expectations," Christopher said, looking at both Jeff and Scott.

"We have no complaints about your work, Mr. Jordan. You're here to discuss a promotion of sorts," Jeff explained. And for the next hour, he and Scott questioned Christopher about everything, his flight training, his experience, his hobbies, his personal life, more questions than Christopher had ever expected in the interview.

"What sort of promotion is this?" Christopher asked.

Jeff looked at Scott, who nodded.

"Mr. Jordan, what we're about to show you must remain a secret. You can't tell anyone. Not your family, not your co-workers, and not your girlfriend," Scott told him. "Follow me, please."

Christopher, intrigued, stood up and followed Scott. "I'm a little worried about now," he said. "Is it anything nasty?"

Scott chuckled. "No, nothing nasty." He went into the lounge and stood with his back to the wall between two light sconces. He fingered them and suddenly disappeared!

Christopher looked around, horrified. "I'm in a madhouse!" he muttered.

"No, Mr. Jordan. You're not. Take your place where Scott was standing. If you reach up to the lights, you'll feel buttons on the top. Press them and the wall will swing you around and out of the room. I'll follow in a minute," Jeff said firmly.

Christopher looked at Jeff, whose face was as serious as ever. He walked over and copied what Scott had just done. What he saw next made his eyes widen.

Scott was standing on a catwalk to his left and motioned for Christopher to join him as Jeff entered the huge chamber.

Christopher walked over to where Scott was, and looked down. He whistled loudly as he gazed at a sleek aircraft. He looked at Scott and Jeff. Then once again at the craft in front of him.

That's a Thunderbird. Thunderbird One. Christopher realized. Then this must mean....

"This may be a wild stab in the dark," he said cautiously, "but aren't you International Rescue?"

"Yes, Mr. Jordan. We are," Jeff affirmed.

"Why have you brought me here?" Christopher asked. He looked at both men again. "I came here

thinking that I was going to be promoted to a nice job somewhere."

"Because we need more pilots," Scott explained. "The number of rescues we are called to has increased dramatically. We need help. Specifically, your help."

"What if I say yes to this?" Christopher folded his arms. "I'd have to leave everything behind, wouldn't I?"

"Yes, you will, Mr. Jordan. There's no doubt there," Jeff chimed in. "As far as your job with Tracy Industries is concerned, you would either be listed as a pilot for the family, or as transferred to some other locale. We have ways of keeping you on the payroll without your having to punch a clock."

"You would move here, to an apartment of your own, and would train with the rest of the team, learning rescue skills and how to fly our Thunderbirds."

Christopher's eyebrows shot up as he heard the words. "What about my girlfriend and Asterix?"

"Asterix?" Scott asked.

"My cat, Asterix." Christopher shuffled his feet. "He's still quite young, you see."

Jeff chuckled. "I'm sure there would be room in your apartment for Asterix. Your girlfriend? You'd have to decide if a long-distance relationship is worth it. Unless at some future point we decide we could use her help. Or, of course, if you marry."

"She's an airline pilot." Christopher smiled. "I was planning on proposing to her soon." He paused. "When would you like a decision?"

"Within the week," Jeff informed him.

Christopher shook his head. "I'll have it for you." He looked at Thunderbird One again. "I'm impressed with your aircraft," he said, smiling.

"Thank you," Scott said with pride. "I think she's very special Bird."

"I would think that she is," Christopher agreed.

Breakfast and interview by TheWrongTrousers and Tikatu

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Mon, 23 Jul 2012 00:07:35 GMT
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Brandon sat on the couch, feet up, holding a piece of paper. The paper contained a contact number he received from Jeff before he left Tracy Island.

I can't believe this is happening. Me, selected to be a member of International Rescue. His thoughts then traveled to more serious ones. What am I going to tell Mom and Dad? They'll want to know where I'm going. And, as much as I would want to tell them, I couldn't. Brandon sighed. He had a lot to think about and little time to do so.

Monday morning found Brandon walking down a familiar hallway. He had done some soul searching over the weekend and had reached his decision concerning International Rescue. He stopped in front of Belmont's office, knocked on the door and waited for permission to enter.

"Come in," Belmont's voice sounded out. Brandon stepped into the office to face his supervisor.

"Oh, McCain, it's you." Belmont sat back, looking at the aquanaut. "Sit down, please. How did things go last week?"

"It went well, sir. I met with the representative and he explained what was expected of me if I decided to take the promotion."

"And? What have you decided?"

Brandon took a deep breath. "I decided to take the promotion. This opportunity gives me a chance to expand my career."

The corner of Belmont's mouth edged up. "I'm sure it will. When do you start?"

"I start in a couple of weeks."

The other side of Belmont's mouth rose, and the man smiled. "We'll miss you around here, McCain. You're one hell of a hydrofoil pilot." He rose and offered his hand. "Hope that this new position turns out to be all that you hope for."

"I'm sure it will be, sir," Brandon replied, shaking Belmont's hand firmly.

After a long day at work, Brandon hurried home. Going to the table, he picked up the piece of paper with the phone number on it. This is it. He picked up the phone, dialing the number written on the paper. An answering machine came on, asking him to leave his name and number.

"This is Brandon McCain. Please call me at your earliest convenience. I've reached my decision regarding your job offer." He gave his phone number then hung up.

Brandon tried to focus on the list he was writing but was distracted by growing excitement and anticipation.

"Let's see," he said, looking over the list, "I need to get the bills paid, close out my bank account, give the landlord my two week's notice and find a place to store my stuff." He looked at the list, adding a few more things, satisfied that it was complete for now. He got up and stretched, looking around the apartment as he did so. In less than two weeks, life as he had known it for the last two years would be forever changed.

Brandon grew restless waiting for Jeff's call. He decided to go to the cemetery to visit his brother and sister. As he made his way through the grounds, his heart grew heavy. Approaching the graves, he sat down in front of them.

[i]Oh Shauna, Tom. I wish you two were here to see what I've accomplished.]/i] He then started talking as if Shauna and Tom were present in front of him.

"You two will not believe the turn my life has taken. I went from WASP to the Rescue Patrol to Tracy Industries to International Rescue. Mr. Tracy's son, Scott, took me out to their island. There I got the biggest job interview of my life and a grand tour of the facilities. Well, as much as they were willing to show me. Afterward, Mr. Tracy offered me a position as an aquanaut with the team." Brandon paused a moment as a chill breeze blew against his neck.

"Unfortunately, you two are the only family members that'll know where I really am. I can't tell Mom and Dad, or any of my friends I'm in International Rescue. As far as they will know, I've taken a promotion that transferred me to Hawaii." He talked to them for a few minutes longer before standing up.

"I need to go now but before I do, I just wanted to thank you both. Shauna, thanks for being there to cheer me up during the rough times. Tom, thank you for helping with my schoolwork. If it weren't for you, I wouldn't be where I am today." He raised his fingers to his lips and then gently touched the headstone with them.

Brandon arrived home to the ringing of the phone. He ran over the counter, answering quickly.

"Hello."

"Mr. McCain? Jeff Tracy here."

"Hello, Mr. Tracy. It's good to hear from you."

"And from you as well. Do you have an answer for me?"

"Yes, I do. I've decided to join International Rescue."

Post by Magicmaster8 & Tikatu on 18/06/04

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Mon, 23 Jul 2012 00:10:07 GMT
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Date: Tuesday, February 14, 2068, Time: 1:30 p.m., Place: Tracy Atoll #3

"Woo Hoo!" Gordon shouted as he passed by the beach once more. His latest birthday present, a personal hoverjet ski, was getting a great shakedown. Right now, Tyler was hanging on to his brother for dear life, his tanned, skinny arms wrapped tightly around Gordon's waist, his bright

flotation vest flashing by. Jeff waved at his two sons, grinning, then turning back to the table laden with the traditional Hawaiian luau foods.

"An excellent choice of gift, Mr. Tracy," Kyrano said as his eyes followed the boys.

"Yes," Jeff agreed. "Gordon's had his eye on this one for a while. I hope he doesn't forget he has guests."

The small group of surfers were caring for their boards and waving at Gordon as he sped by. Back and forth again, then the copper-haired birthday boy powered down his new toy and brought it in to shore. Tyler ran up to the eating area, slinging off his flotation vest as he rubbed his hands together.

"Didja see me, Dad? Kyrano? Is this poi? Yum!"

Scott, who was drinking a beer, reached out and ruffled the boy's stiff hair. "Did you have fun, Spud?"

Tyler pushed Scott's hand away, sticking out his tongue. Scott reached out and grabbed Ty around the waist and turned him upside down. He put down his beer and began to tickle. Tyler squirmed and laughed uncontrollably.

"Well? Did you?"

"Hahaha! Uncle! Uncle! Yeah! It was great!"

Scott stopped the tickling and turned the boy right side up, then ruffled his Tyler's hair again and picked up his beer. Gordon ran up to where the food was laid out, buffet style.

"You surfing, Scott?"

"Sure, Gords. I'm coming." Scott put his beer aside and picked up his own surfboard to join Gordon and his friends.

Jeff turned back to Kyrano as he watched his sons join up with Gordon's friends and head down to the waves.

"Will the furnishings be ready for our new team members, Kyrano?"

Kyrano continued his work, slicing up fresh pineapple even as Tyler piled his plate with the fruit and grabbed a bowl full of poi. Jeff snagged the boy and gave him a warning glance. "No more or you'll have the runs!" he murmured. Tyler nodded, and ran off to join his mother who sat with Emily under a group of shady palms. Jeff looked up at Kyrano again.

"In answer to your question, Mr. Tracy, yes, the furnishings will be ready. We are providing a dresser, a full-sized bed, a nightstand, a sofa, end tables with lamps, and an electronics center. Also, a dining table with four chairs, dishes and other kitchen accoutrements. Everything in neutral tones." Kyrano frowned. "It will be very bland."

Jeff chuckled. "Yes, it will. But we'll make sure that our new people know that the apartments are for them to decorate as they see fit. And that they will have an allowance from us to do so. I see many cargo planes in our future, Kyrano."

"Like when you let Dr. Tracy redecorate parts of the Villa?" Kyrano said, a smile slowly transforming his face.

"Exactly like that," Jeff said, remembering the flurry of activity and shopping that Dianne had done when he offered to let her redecorate the public areas of the house and their own master suite. She mostly left the lounge alone, for which he was grateful, but the rest of the Villa soon had her personal touch.

"I hope that the new personnel will like the apartments, Mr. Tracy."

"So do I, Kyrano."

Post by Tikatu on 18/06/04

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Mon, 23 Jul 2012 00:13:43 GMT
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Date: Tuesday, February 14, Time: 11:30 p.m., Place: Tracy Atoll #3

Jeff and Dianne walked the beach of the little atoll in the moonlight, hand in hand. They had left the adults still partying around a blazing fire and the children tucked into their cabins on the Lucille under the watchful eyes of Kyrano and Emily.

She wore her strapless floral bathing suit with a matching sarong skirt and a light mesh cover up. He wore his surfer-style swim trunks and an open cotton shirt. Both were barefoot. He carried an insulated basket. She carried a blanket.

Hand unclasped and slipped around waists as the full moon rose slowly into the starry night sky, turning the white sands to silver and creating strange, dappled spots under the palm trees at the edge of the beach. They walked a good ways, far enough so that the noise and the light from the party behind them was long faded. They walked until they came upon a tepee of sticks rising out of a stone-edged pit in the sand.

"When did you get out here to do this?" she asked smiling.

"While Kyrano was roasting the pig. Everyone else was swimming or sunning themselves and I just came down here with a pile of firewood...." Jeff's voice dropped off as he stuck a long lighter into the pile and the dry wood caught fire. Dianne spread out the blanket, and opened the basket.

"Oh, some nice wine and leftovers from the luau. How thoughtful of Kyrano!"

"He's a gem, all right. Don't know what the household would do without him."

"Me either. I think that if he and my mother ever married, she'd have to come to the Island."

"Too true. I wouldn't want him to leave us and there's plenty for her to do at the Villa. There always has been."

Dianne poured the wine and knelt next to the basket, opening the small boxes of luau goodies. She pulled out a piece of fresh pineapple and as Jeff sat back on his elbows, she teased his mouth with it. Finally, he got his teeth in it and bit off a piece, then surprised her by taking another quick bite. His lips kissed her fingertips as he did so. He sipped some wine, as did she, and then he fed her a small piece of the roast pork. She chewed, swallowed, then proceeded to lick his greasy fingers, holding his wrist, her tongue sliding sensuously along their lengths. Jeff closed his eyes, feeling a familiar and welcome heat flash through him. He sat up fully, then reached out and unfastened her sarong, sliding both hands around her waist under the cover up.

"Come to me, my sweet valentine," he said, his voice rough with desire and emotion. He pulled her to him, letting her wrap her long legs around him while sitting on his lap as he sat cross-legged. She smiled, and fastened her mouth on his for a long kiss. He could feel the signs of her arousal through her swimsuit and that just fueled his own passion. He laced his fingers into her hair and kissed her again, then let his hands slowly move from the sides of her head down the sides of her neck and across her bare shoulders, pushing aside the cover up. She moved her arms to allow him to slide it off, his hands moving slowly down, leaving her in just her bathing suit. His lips began to trickle kisses down her neck and shoulders, while her hands roved over his chest and back.

"This is why Ah like Valentine's Day," she whispered, her drawl thickening. "You always have such good ideahs."

"And once we're finished here, we can take a little swim," Jeff suggested between nuzzles.

"Um-hmm," was all she said as words were lost between them and they shared their love for each other out on the moon-silvered sands.

Post by Tikatu on 18/06/04

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Mon, 23 Jul 2012 00:17:52 GMT
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15th February 10pm Anna Marchant's Flat, London.

Christopher bounded up the last set of steps up to Anna's front door.

Trying the front door, he waited for a few moments before reaching up to the concealed hiding place for the key.

Unlocking the door, he went inside. Instantly, there was a strong smell of perfume in the air, and steam wafted from the open bathroom door.

Closing the front door, he crept to the bathroom. The bath was still hot, bubbles all over the place, and the normally neat towels were strewn over the place.

Smiling to himself, Christopher moved towards the bedroom. He opened the door slowly.

"Anna?" he said softly, "Are you ok?"

His smile faded as he saw that there was a man in bed with her.

"Christopher?" Anna sat bolt upright, the man doing the same. "Oh god! Christopher, I'm sorry."

"Really?" Christopher's voice became cold. "Seems that good old Captain Marsh here was more than enough to make you forget about me."

He looked at her. "How long? I think I have a right to know."

"Not long." Anna's voice was full of anguish, "I'm so sorry! I wanted to tell you."

Christopher held up his hands. "Don't bother. You can have him. I've got a new job which means that I'll be moving abroad."

He turned to leave. "I'll be around tomorrow to get my things, I don't want to see him here, otherwise I will lose my self control."

"And I'm taking Asterix with me." He smiled. "After all, I bought him."

Christopher left Anna's flat without another word.

Christopher flung himself down onto his sofa. Asterix meowed and leapt onto his lap.

"I envy you, mate," Christopher said, tickling his cat's chin. "You don't have any worries, do you?"

Asterix looked at him and purred. "Mrrow?"

"How would you like to move somewhere where you would be made a fuss of every day of the week?" Christopher said as he reached over to tap a number into his vidphone.

Asterix purred again, nestling into Christopher's lap.

After a while, the number was answered.

"Jeff Tracy speaking." The senior member of the Tracy family appeared on the screen.

"Mr Tracy." Christopher paused, "I've decided to accept your offer."

Post by TheWrongTrousers on 18/06/04

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out

Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Mon, 23 Jul 2012 00:21:32 GMT

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Date: Saturday, February 18, 2068, Time: 4 p.m., Place: Tracy Island

Marty Tisevich landed in the swimming hole with a satisfying splash! The rope he used to swing over the water swept back, and newly minted eleven-year-old Alex took his place.

"Geronimo!" he shouted as he swung out and then dropped, arms and legs tucking into a neat cannonball.

"That's the way to do it, Bud!" Gordon called encouragingly from the water's edge. He handed his father one of the cans of soda he held and then opened and gulped from the other. Together he, Jeff, and Virgil watched the boys who were there to celebrate Alex's birthday continue their water play.

"Too bad we didn't find this little place when we were building the Villa, huh, Dad?" Virgil said as he leaned forward on the rock where he was perched.

"No, Virgil, it's just fine. The spring doesn't put out enough water for the needs of the complex, and it goes down to a trickle if we get a real dry spell. Desalination was our best option," Jeff explained. He took a sip of his soda. "Besides, I would never have met Brains if we didn't go that route. It was his paper on desalination plants for the single dwelling that caught my eye and sent me looking for him. I just hope that our current set up will handle the influx of new people." Jeff looked out at the engineer, who had been cajoled into the camping trip by his student, Alex. He was about to take his own turn at the rope swing.

"Go, Brains! Show 'em how it's done!" Gordon shouted, whistling loud enough to make Jeff wince. The scientist took a running start, grabbed hold of the rope and swung widely over the swimming hole. He tucked into a cannonball then spun in the air a couple of times as if he were doing a fancy dive. However, he didn't let go of his tuck and landed in the pool with a tremendous gush of water.

"Woo Hoo!" Gordon called, standing up and applauding as Brains came up, shaking his head and scrubbing his face.

Jeff turned to Virgil. "I see Brains has been taking lessons."

"Nah. He's always known how to do that, Dad. You just haven't seen him at the pool too much," Virgil explained.

Now Gordon ran along the edge of the swimming hole, grabbed the rope, and making a noise that was half-Tarzan, half-Apache, cannonballed into the water.

Scott joined the small group. "What does Alex think of his gift?" he asked as he sat down beside Jeff and picked up Gordon's soda.

"The hoverbike? He can't wait to use it," Jeff said, grinning. "Unfortunately, since it's IR-issue equipment, he can't use it in front of his friends. That's where the mountain bike came in." Alex had been presented with a top-of-the-line mountain bike complete with safety equipment at the formal part of his birthday at the Villa that afternoon. Then the men in the family took Alex's guests and moved out to the wilds on the other side of the Island to camp around the swimming hole overnight.

But at the family party the night before, Alex had been stunned into speechlessness when Jeff gave him a hoverbike of his own to ride.

"Wow!" was all he could say when he found his voice. "This is the coolest present I've ever gotten!"

Jeff's attention was turned from his reverie to the present by the sound of a familiar "Whoa!" coming from the swimming hole. He glanced over just in time to see Tyler falling from the sky, limbs flailing, making what looked to be an uncomfortable splash in the clear pool.

Jeff started to get up, but Scott motioned to him to stay put. He drained Gordon's soda, and said, "I'll get him, Dad." Jeff relaxed. Scott had spent so many years helping him raise the four younger boys that it was natural for him to pick right up with these two new adopted brothers when they came. Besides, Tyler's admittedly favorite brother, John, was back at the Villa, manning the command desk in case a call came in. With Brains at the campsite to help out, one or more of the Tracy brothers could sneak away and back to base if necessary and not really be missed.

Gordon came back to the knot of Tracy men and sat down again. He looked around for his soda can, picked it up, turned it upside down, and frowned. "I could have sworn there was more in there." Virgil rolled his eyes but kept a straight face while Jeff turned a mild countenance to Gordon.

"You must have been mistaken, son."

Gordon shrugged and got up in search of another soda. Virgil and Jeff looked at each other and chuckled. Virgil glanced up and Jeff followed his gaze.

"You gonna come try out the swing, Dad?" A dripping Alex stood there, a hopeful look on his glistening face. Virgil chuckled behind Jeff and gave his shoulder a playful push.

"Go on, Dad. Show 'em that there's life in the old man yet!"

Alex extended a hand, and Jeff took it, levering himself first into a crouch, then to his feet. The two walked together for a moment, then Jeff took the lead and began to run, looking back at his second-youngest son with a twinkle in his eye.

"Last one in is a rotten egg!" he called.

Alex's eyes widened and he yelled, "Hey!" before sprinting off in pursuit of his dad.

Post by Tikatu on 18/06/04

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Mon, 23 Jul 2012 00:25:19 GMT
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Date: Sunday, February 19, 2068, Time: 7:05 a.m., Place: Tracy Island

"Mr. Tracy? Mr. Tracy. You'd better get up." Brains's tenor voice stirred Jeff into wakefulness. He rubbed his bleary eyes to see the scientist peering into the tent Jeff shared with Tyler and Scott. He sat up, noticing that both sleeping bags next to his were empty.

"Kyrano is here, Mr. Tracy, and has started breakfast. Most of Alex's guests are up and clamoring to go to the swimming hole again."

"Kyrano? What's he doing here?" Jeff asked, his voice hoarse. He cleared his throat. "I thought Scott and Gordon were supposed to do breakfast."

Brains looked out of the tent in both directions, and then stepped fully inside. "There was an emergency call. All three of your older sons went to answer it. Kyrano came back to help with the guests."

"Thank you, Brains." Jeff nodded in understanding. He knew it had been a possibility. He climbed out of the sleeping bag, fully clothed like most good campers would be, and ran a hand through his silvery hair. Brains retreated out into the open and Tyler took his place, carefully carrying a cup of hot, black coffee. Jeff smiled at his youngest, whose stiff hair was rumpled and sticking out in strange places.

"Kyrano sent me with the coffee and says that if you want breakfast, you'd better hurry. Alex and his friends are about to scarf it all down," Tyler said matter-of-factly. "Where did the big boys go? An emergency?"

"Yes, Ty. That's why Kyrano is here. Thanks for bringing me the coffee. Let's go get some breakfast."

Three hours later, after one last dip in the swimming hole, the campsite was broken down and the crew had returned to the Villa. Jeff tried to enter the lounge via the study and found the solid study door locked. He smiled. The grate between the study and the lounge was an inadequate barrier against guests seeing what really went on in the lounge during an International Rescue emergency call. So, part of Operation: Cover-up required that the study be locked. Jeff pulled out

his master key and opened the door, passing into the room and locking the portal behind him. Then he stepped through the ornate grate and entered the nerve center of the world's premier rescue organization.

"How's it going, Scott?" he asked of his oldest son, who sat behind his desk. "No, don't get up. I have to leave in a little bit to fly the gang back to the States. Kyrano and Tin-Tin are coming with me."

"It's rough," Scott replied. "We're responding to a oil refinery explosion in Saudi Arabia. There's a group of riggers trapped in a small supply shack in the middle of several flaming gushers. Jay is manning Mobile Control while Vee and Gee attempt to put out the fires and get to the riggers. As they put the flames out with the nitro/dicetyline shells from the Firefly, the company's disaster team comes in to cap the gushers. The rough part is that the disaster team leader is giving Jay a hard time, trying to tell him what to do. Jay is ready to deck him."

"That's for sure!" Alan said, piping up from his portrait's frame. "Ess, I have Jay's latest projections. Two more to go and then they can clear out the riggers. Doc is with them to assess the injuries."

"Damn," Jeff swore softly. "Here I wanted to say goodbye to her. After we drop off Axe's friends and pick up Cee and the MIL, I've got to go on to New York and spend a week at corporate."

"I can patch you through, base," Alan offered.

"Please do, Ay." Jeff said.

Dianne was in a passenger seat in the Firefly. The heat from the fiery gushers felt intense even through her heat-resistant suit. Gordon had just fired off another nitroglycerin/dicetyline shell when she got the word that base wanted to speak to her. The Firefly rocked with the recoil and she held on tightly. Then as the massive machine moved forward on its caterpillar tracks, she answered the hail. She smiled sadly, knowing just whom it was and why he wanted to call. Sure enough, Jeff's neatly dressed and pressed figure showed on her wrist telecomm. She pressed a button, and the audio was fed through her suit's hood, offering her a modicum of privacy.

"How's it going, Doc?" he asked softly.

She smiled as best she could for the tiny camera in the telecomm. Holding it as close to her mouth as possible, she replied, "I'm hot and bothered, base. And not just because of the rescue. I know why you called, and I love you, and I'll see you in a week or so, okay? Now, we're nearly at the shack, so I've got to go do my job. Call when you get to your first destination and we can talk, okay?"

"FAB, Doc," Jeff responded. "I love you and I'll call soon. Base out."

Dianne turned off the hood audio and sighed, a tear escaping unnoticed. Then she shook herself and pulled out her medikit, mentally preparing herself for what she might encounter in the small building sitting before the Firefly.

Back at the Island, a quiet cough drew Jeff and Scott's attention. They both turned to see Kyrano standing at the divider between the study and the lounge. Besides Jeff and Dianne, he was the only other person to have a master key that opened all the doors in the Villa and beyond.

"Mr. Tracy, we are ready for you. Your luggage is stowed, and the boys are settled into Tracy Three."

"Thank you, Kyrano. I'm coming." Jeff turned to Scott. "I'll call when we hit Lisa's house. But let me know beforehand if there's any major new development."

"FAB, Dad."

Jeff sighed, looking around the room, his eyes lighting especially on his wife's picture. Then he turned and followed the retainer down to the plane.

Post by Tikatu on 19/06/04[/color]

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Mon, 23 Jul 2012 00:28:37 GMT
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Date: Sunday, February 19, Time: 7:50 p.m. Location: Callie's apartment near Cape Canaveral, Florida

Callie was packing her personal belongings as she thought back to the visit she had with her family in Opp during the previous weekend.

*****Saturday, February 11, at her family home in Opp, Alabama*****

She arrived at the family home the night before, to the excitement of her family, especially her two older brothers, Joseph and Brian.

The next morning, the three siblings went together on a fishing trip at nearby Cameron Creek. Whenever they got together at home, they enjoyed catching fresh fish for a good meal later in the day. With enough to last through the weekend, they went back to the house to clean their fish.

Brian was first to stir up some conversation. "So, Callie, you were hired for a job at Tracy Industries?"

"Yeah, and believe me, I'm excited. As a scientist I'll have a golden opportunity to be helpful before dangerous situations arise."

"I'll tell you," said Joseph, "that Jeff Tracy guy is one of the best. I can't believe our little sister gets to work for someone so dedicated to helping others. Is it really true that his business is expanding so much he's hiring a lot of people?"

"Yes, and I'm happy to say Tracy Industries is not one of those companies that implodes on itself

because of rapid expansion."

"That reminds me, we may be getting a contract with Tracy Industries for some steel. One of their reps showed up about four months ago and was impressed by our steel-making methods. We're one of five companies considered. He also said Mr. Tracy may choose all five, which I wouldn't mind at all."

"That's great, Joe!" Callie exclaimed. "I guess in a unique way, all of us may be working for Tracy Industries."

Brian laughed. "Right. Anyway, how did you even get in touch with the company so fast?"

Callie had to think fast. "I saw the ad online and decided to e-mail my résumé to Tracy Industries. I was contacted a couple of days later for an interview. I was offered the job pretty quickly, and, after some thought, opted to take it. I even got to meet Jeff Tracy in person!"

Brian frowned a little. "Yeah, but what about being an astronaut? You won't be able to get into space again."

"Now wait a sec, Bri. I was hired for communications and engineering, but they know I have astronaut experience. I'm sure there will be a spot in the aerospace division soon enough. I'm not upset about it."

Joseph said, "Hey, whatever makes you happy. That's all that matters."

"Right. It'll be okay, Bri."

"Okay, I know when I'm outnumbered," joked Brian. "Come on, let's finish cleanin' the fish so we can start grillin' and steamin' 'em."

*****Later that day*****

They served up a lot of catfish and red snapper at the dinner table, a delight to all who ate them.

"Mmm," said their mother Lorraine. "I haven't had fish this delicious in a long time. Nice job, kids."

"Thanks, Mom," they said together.

Lorraine came up to her daughter and planted a big kiss on her cheek. "Callie, we are all so proud of you. You're the first in our family to graduate from the prestigious MIT, then becoming a member of the World Space Agency. Now you're adding more to your success with this new job at Tracy Industries."

"Thanks, Mom. I'm just grateful for the support you've all given me through all this. There were times I nearly gave up, but you helped me through it."

Joseph asked, "When do you leave for your new job?"

"One week from Monday. And believe me, it won't be an easy trip. I'm going all the way to Hawaii for it."

"When will you get a chance to come home again?" Lorraine asked.

"That depends. I know I'll need at least a month to get settled into the job."

"I think we can survive. Don't worry about us too much, Callie. You'll have to concentrate on your new job soon enough."

Just then, their father Richard entered the house. "Hi, everybody. Callie, I'm sorry I wasn't here to greet you last night, but--"

"It's okay, Dad. Mom told me you were up in Birmingham most of the week for a steel works conference and wanted to stop at Lake Martin for a little fishing trip with your buddies."

"I'm glad you're not upset, but I'm also so happy for you, getting that new job with Tracy Industries. Did Joe tell you--?"

"About the possible new contract? Yes, he did. It's great news for all of us."

"I know. Could you imagine if Tracy Industries had to send you out here for a chemical emergency?"

"It would be great to see you all again, even if I were on duty." If I'm on Thunderbird Five, though, I really couldn't be of any help here. I guess that's one of the downsides of being a part of International Rescue.

"Okay, hun. We know you'll make us proud."

*****Present Time*****

"I hope I will make you proud, Dad, not only as a science consultant for Tracy Industries, but also as a member of International Rescue. I'm just sorry I can't tell you guys everything. Believe me, I won't forget what you've all taught me."

She placed her last photo into her box before sealing it with tape. The photo was of her entire family, whom she knew would be there for her in spirit.

*****The next morning along the Space Coast*****

Callie waited patiently for the arrival of a jet. "Almost time...to leave my life as I once knew it."

The jet landed and stopped just in front of her. Out of the jet came Scott Tracy. "Hello, Professor Spencer. Are you ready?"

"Yes, Mr. Tracy, I am."

"Please, I'd rather just be Scott. After all, you'll be dealing with so many Tracys you won't be able to tell who's who if you just call them 'Mister,' 'Miss,' or 'Mrs.'"

"All right, Scott, but only if you call me Callie."

"Okay," he said with a smile. "Just relax for now. Everything's going to be just fine."

"Thank you, Scott." She grabbed two of her suitcases while Scott took a third and her box of personal belongings into the jet.

After they buckled themselves in, Scott spoke into the radio. "Tracy One to Tracy Island. Professor Spencer and I are leaving now. We'll be home in about six hours."

"Roger, Tracy One," said Virgil on the other side.

As the plane took off, Callie thought, This is it. Goodbye WSA and hello Tracy Industries and International Rescue.

Post by TracyFan4Ever on 21/06/04

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Mon, 23 Jul 2012 00:33:44 GMT
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February 21st, New York

The New York City Heliport was windy and chilly, even though the sun was shining down. From the first day Elise had reported for work, she knew she was going to enjoy working at Tracy industries. Chief Flight Co-ordinator and Crew Chief, Steven Hunt, had spent the first few days introducing Elise to the operations, the fleet of aircraft, maintenance procedures and the personnel she would be working with. It had been a lot to absorb, but Elise was up for the challenge. Steve himself had taken her up in a variety of helijets and private helicopters that the fleet owned, and was impressed by her versatile flying skills. He had no doubts about her ability to handle any situation that may arise.

Within days, Elise was flying by herself, familiarizing herself with New York airspace and the various heliports located on Manhattan Island. She was in awe of the view every time she flew across the Hudson River and back around the city.

She had practiced landings on the TI building a few times, as this was the main location she would be using. The sheer size of the building had really impressed her! Located on the corner of Wall Street and Broad Street, in the heart of the Financial District, Tracy Industries was as intimidating as a building as well as a company.

The sun continued to shine as Elise filed her flight plan and went out to her aircraft. Today she was piloting one of the smaller corporate choppers to pick up a Japanese business associate of Jeff Tracy. Once her pre-flight check was complete she was on her way. Mr. Yoshimoto was

waiting patiently for her as she landed at JFK's heliport. Climbing down, she headed to where he was waiting, ducking the rotary blades as she walked.

"Mr. Yoshimoto?" He smiled and nodded slightly.

"Hi, I'm Elise Collins, Pilot for Mr. Tracy. If you would please follow me, we'll get underway."

The slight, middle-aged man quietly followed Elise and once she had stowed his bag, she helped him board. "May I please sit in front? I would very much like to see the view," he asked of her.

"Yes, of course. We'll take the scenic route and you'll still arrive on time." She smiled in return.

The chopper lifted off with ease and headed across Hudson Bay towards Downtown. Flying past their destination, Elise told Mr. Yoshimoto she would show him some landmarks and then return to the Financial District. Elise was enjoying herself, and her passenger seemed very pleased indeed.

"That, sir, up ahead, is the Brooklyn Bridge. There's also a heliport located down there too."

More smiles and nods indicated that he understood what he was hearing. They flew on towards the 34th Street Heliport and then banked left. "That big open space over there is where the Empire State Building used to stand." They both looked out at the empty area, which was now below them. "Unfortunately, during it's planned move a few years ago, it collapsed, trapping two men beneath the rubble.

"Ah, yes! I remember this. In Japan, we also moved a building, but with much success. Did those men survive?"

"Yes, luckily International Rescue was called and got them out. They were hurt, but alive." Elise then pointed out another, smaller, empty lot. "Fulmar Financial use to be on that spot, it too fell when the Empire State collapsed. It had been evacuated so again, no lives were lost."

"I remember all of this now. Some of my clients had accounts with Fulmar Financial," Mr. Yoshimoto replied.

By this time, they were heading back towards the Financial District. Passing the NY Stock Exchange, the chopper made its approach towards the rooftop helipad of Tracy Industries. Upon arriving, two executives approached to help Mr. Yoshimoto. Before departing, he turned to Elise with a large smile and said, "Thank you!"

"You're welcome, sir!" she answered. After she'd switched off the engines, completed an all over check, she secured the chopper and headed over to the stairwell. The employee elevator took her down to ground level where she hailed a cab and headed home. Mr. Yoshimoto was her only scheduled passenger for the day, and she didn't have to return to work until the following afternoon when she had to take him back to the airport.

Later, at home, sinking into a hot tub full of scented bubbles, she chuckled to herself. "I love my job!"

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Mon, 23 Jul 2012 00:39:57 GMT
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February 22nd, New York

Late the next day Elise was in the flight control room at Tracy Industries. The room was located above the Penthouse Suites, but below the rooftop. The room had maps and controls and flight info and also a small lounge, complete with a comfy couch and coffee maker, for pilots to use in between flights. Elise was munching on a donut, having finished her coffee, and was waiting for Mr. Yoshimoto's arrival. Her pre-flight check was completed, so all she had to do now was kill some time. Flicking through a magazine, she had just started to read an article when the intercom sounded. Walking over to it, she hit the switch and spoke.

"Elise Collins here, go ahead."

The deep voice of Jeff Tracy startled her. "Elise, we won't be needing the chopper tonight. Mr. Yoshimoto will be staying with us another day, but before you go, if you have a moment, I would like to see you."

Frowning, she answered, "Is there a problem, sir?"

"No, not at all, I need to ask a favor of you, so please come down to my penthouse Office suites in about 5 minutes."

"Yes, sir."

Standing outside the office of Jeff Tracy was a little nerve racking to say the least, but Elise knocked and patiently waited. Jeff answered and smiled, making her feel immediately more at ease.

"Thank you for coming, please do come in." Jeff gestured with his hand as he held the door open.

Impressive! was the first thought to cross Elise's mind as she entered the spacious, luxurious office. Mr. Tracy obviously spares no expense when it comes to creature comforts. She thought about her own mediocre, but cozy apartment. Jeff walked behind his desk and sat down, indicating that she should do the same in one of the leather chairs opposite his desk.

"I hear you're enjoying your new position with us, and I've had glowing reports about your skills as a pilot."

"Thank you, sir, and yes, I'm enjoying it very much."

He paused and looked at her, and she later would swear he had a twinkle in his eye when he

asked his next question. "Are you, by chance, the pilot Scott was with when there was a near collision with the Fireflash?" Jeff couldn't help himself, he had to ask. When Scott had told him about the incident, Jeff had laughed at his son's vivid recollections of the entire episode.

Elise sat there quietly. Her prayers had gone unanswered. She had prayed for the ground to open up and swallow her... it hadn't and it didn't. She had no choice but to answer him.

"Yes, sir. It was an incident with one of the first prototypes of the Fireflash, sir. That aircraft didn't go into commercial service until after Scott and I had left the Air Force... sir."

Jeff noticed how deliberately slow her words were, and found himself struggling not to laugh. "Well, I'm glad my son was in such capable hands at the time."

"Thank you," was the small, meek reply.

"Now that's out of the way..." Jeff moved onto the reason he'd asked Elise to come to his office. "Elise, I asked you down here because I'm in need of a pilot for a private trip I need to make to New Hampshire. I'm looking into buying some real estate as a surprise gift for my wife. The only day I can manage this trip is Saturday. I'm aware that day is your day off, but I want an experienced pilot and wanted to give you the first opportunity to refuse."

Elise digested all of this and knew she wouldn't say no. "Of course, Mr. Tracy! I'd be honored to fly you to New Hampshire on Saturday."

"Good! That's settled then." Jeff then gave her flight times and a few details and Elise almost bounced out of his office.

I'm going to be Jeff Tracy's personal pilot! Adding that thought to the fact that Jeff had told her she would be piloting his own elite private helijet, Elise was feeling on top of the world, and couldn't wait to get airborne.

Post by FrankieCTB2 on 22/06/04

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Mon, 23 Jul 2012 00:43:02 GMT
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Date: Wednesday, February 22, Time: 5:30 p.m., Place: Tracy Family penthouse, Tracy Industries building, New York City.

Jeff sighed and slung his suit coat over the back of the sofa, pulling loose his tie and unbuttoning his shirt's top button. He stretched and went over to the small bar that sat in the lounge of his penthouse suite. Looking around, he realized that he had yet to let Dianne loose on the decor of the place.

After we get our new recruits settled. Then I'll let her redecorate this place.

He smiled, then went to the desk and picked up the vidphone. Dialing the number of the place closest to his heart, he sat and waited for someone to answer.

Date: Thursday, February 23, Time: 10:30 a.m., Place: Tracy Island

The vidphone rang in the lounge and Cherry, who was passing through on her way to the patio, answered it. She grinned as she saw her Dad's face smiling back.

"Hello, there, Princess! How are you doing today?"

"I'm fine, Dad! I'm on my way to art class with Virgil. How are things at corporate?"

"Busy, Cherry, very busy. And cold. And sometimes lonely. I miss you and your brothers...."

"I know: 'and especially your mother'. Should I get her?"

"Please, Princess." As Cherry used her telecomm to call Dianne to the lounge, Jeff asked, "How is your Grandma Lisa doing? And is Professor Spencer settling in?"

"Grandma's fine. She's taken over the furnishing of the new apartments, making little homey touches here and there. Professor Spencer is on a tour of Thunderbird Three right now. She ended up getting apartment B2, one of the one bedroom ones. On the second floor. It must be pretty lonely and quiet over there right now."

"That will change in a few days, Princess, as the rest of the new recruits arrive."

"Don't I know it!" Cherry looked up and to her right. "Here's Mom. I love you, Dad and can't wait for you to get home."

"Ditto, Princess. See you in a few days." Cherry got up and let her mother take the chair in front of the vidphone, then headed out to her art lesson.

"Hello, love," Dianne said as she sat down, smiling.

"Hello, dearest. I'm so glad to see you. It's been a bear of a day."

"I'm sorry to hear that, Jeff. What was the trouble?"

Jeff went into explaining his day and Dianne listened sympathetically. He was always hesitant about dumping his corporate troubles onto her shoulders, but, as she so often said, it was one way that she could learn about the company and what it did. Besides, she would point out, he needed to vent, and if he couldn't vent to his wife, whom could he vent to?

"And you know what the worst part is, love?"

"No, what?"

"You're not here."

Dianne smiled. "You know I wish I were. But someone's got to be here to get our new recruits settled when they arrive. Professor Spencer is making herself at home. John is talking about taking her up to Thunderbird Five for some training when he goes next month."

"Sounds good. I hope our other new recruits fit in as well," Jeff said. He stopped for a minute, and then looked at her frankly. "As far as our new mechanic, Kat, is concerned, I'm beginning to regret not having been upfront with her when she came for her interview. When she comes, will you see that she's given a private tour and told right away about what's going on? And tender my apologies as well."

"I'll see to it. Even if I can't do it myself, I'll deputize one of the boys," Dianne assured him.

"And now, my dear heart, shall we discuss what we'll be doing when I finally get back home and have you in my arms again?" Jeff asked with a sly tone and a wink.

"By all means, suh, let's... discuss," Dianne replied with a fillip of drawl and a raised eyebrow.

Post by Tikatu on 23/06/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Mon, 23 Jul 2012 17:43:50 GMT
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West Lodge, Foxleyheath, 22nd February 2068

Kat stared at the untidy heap of clothes, which was piled on her bed, and over-spilling onto the floor of her bedroom. Although she was moving out, she would have to be brutal with some of her things.

"Hello, anyone in?" Lady Penelope called from the front door.

"Up here in my bedroom," Kat called back.

Lady Penelope joined Kat in the untidy bedroom.

Kat groaned. "I want to take so much, but I am not sure how much room I shall have, nor how the rooms will be furnished. Do you suppose we shall have to provide our own furniture?"

"You will each be given your own apartment, consisting of a bedroom, bathroom, kitchen, dining area, and sitting room."

Kat looked suspiciously at Lady Penelope.

Lady Penelope looked slightly flustered. "Well, when we discussed him wanting a mechanic, he told me of his plans for the accommodation. The bedroom furniture provided will be a dresser, full size bed, night stand, and the sitting room will have a sofa, dining table and four chairs, end table

with lamps and an electronics centre. There will be kitchen accoutrements. The décor will be very neutral, so you can add your own colour scheme."

Kat gasped, so much to furnish! She looked at Lady Penelope. "Gosh, I shall have to do some serious shopping. I have a couple of sheets and some pillow cases and pillows, but most of my furnishings belong to you."

Gosh! she thought, This is going to take forever!

Eventually after some hard decisions, Kat had three suitcases packed with clothes, both for work, leisure and for special occasions that Lady Penelope had hinted there might be.

Lady Penelope looked at Kat. She felt guilty that she could not enlighten her more about what was in store for her. I only hope Jeff tells her as soon as she is on the island, she thought.

"Kat," Lady Penelope said, "I have plenty of bed linen and furnishings. I think we can furnish your apartment from here at Foxleyheath."

Lady Penelope and Kat set about looking at bed linen first. Kat chose some sheets and matching pillowcases in a soft lilac and pink print design. "There are some curtains that will pick up these colours," Lady Penelope said, adding them to the pile.

"Just in case it may get cool some nights, I have a lightweight duvet with a cover to compliment the sheets. There are some pretty deep pink lampshades in one of the guest rooms. Run and fetch them, Kat, they will match in very nicely."

Lady Penelope also produced some cream coloured sheets and pillowcases with lilac and pink candy stripes. "You can never have too much linen," she said.

"I can't accept all this!" Kat gasped.

As if she had not heard, Lady Penelope added, "Now for the sitting room."

Kat chose some cream curtains. Lady Penelope found two cream and blue rugs and some cream, blue and light brown scatter cushions. Lady Penelope also found some cream tablecloths and placemats to match. Kat added to the pile of things mounting up on the floor, some pictures of scenes around her home, her favourite horse and her beloved car. She also produced a Chinese picture of a red dragon, drawn on rice paper, some favourite ornaments, and all her favourite books.

"There, I think that is almost about everything. If you find you want some more, then please, just contact me," Lady Penelope said.

"Lady Penelope, you are too kind."

"Think nothing of it, my dear."

"Now, we must get Parker to help with the packing of all this."

Kat went to her room to sort out her personal things, and saw her guitar. Mm, I may need this, she thought and added it to the rest of the things to be packed. On the other hand, I shall take this with me on the plane. I don't want it damaged.

Thinking of the plane, she wondered who would be sent to fetch her. She secretly hoped it would be John. She rather liked the tall, blond haired young man.

Kat had a last look round. Well, if anything has been missed I shall have to contact Lady Penelope and get it sent on.

Post by Tawnyangel22 on 24/06/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Mon, 23 Jul 2012 17:45:48 GMT
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The George Pub, London, 22nd February 2068, 9:00pm

Everyone raised their glasses as Danny toasted to Nikki's new job and her departure. "It's a shame that the others had to work and couldn't be here so I'll speak for them. You will definitely be missed at the hospital, especially by me. I mean who else am I going to ask to lend me some money?" Everyone laughed as he turned to Evie.

Evie shook her head, "The Evie bank is closed and will not open again for anyone named Danny or anyone who Danny hires to ask for him."

Nikki laughed. She was definitely going to miss this group of friends the most. "Speaking of money, Danny, don't you owe me?"

"I'll buy your drinks for the rest of the night." Danny sat down next to Nikki, put his arm around her and kissed her on the cheek, hoping that she would accept his compromise.

"I wish I could stay longer so that you could buy me that drink, but I've got to go home and finish packing. I've still got a lot to do."

Danny looked sad. "You can do that tomorrow."

"I can't, I'm spending the day with my family."

"Oh please stay longer," Evie pleaded. "I'll help you with the rest of your packing."

"Me too." Danny said.

"Evie, you're helping me anyway, you said yesterday." As Nikki thought about it, she looked at their pleading faces and smiled. "You two look like little children when they beg their parents for

sweets." Their expressions didn't change. "It might take all night. Oh, ok. I'll stay longer, 45 minutes tops."

"Great. If it's going to be an all-nighter then you better prepare the couch for me to sleep on." Danny stood up. "I'll get you another drink."

"Just cola this time!" Nikki shouted to him over the music as he walked towards the bar. Nikki turned to Evie. "So are you and Emma going to find a new roommate when I leave?"

"I think so. We talked about her sister, Laura, moving in. It hasn't been decided yet." Evie looked into her glass. "Part of me wishes that you didn't take that job, but another part is happy for you because it's great. A new country and new culture, I'll envy you a bit and I'll miss you a lot."

Nikki hugged her friend as tears rolled down both their cheeks. "I'll miss you, too. I'll still keep in touch with you and hopefully I'll get time off in the future to come back for a visit."

Danny walked over and saw the two friends. "Is there any room for the rest of us in there?"

Nikki smiled through her tears. "Of course."

Danny put down his drink and shouted to the others. "Pile on Nikki."

Nikki laughed as she was squashed between her closest friends.

Post by Nikki-browneyes1 on 24/06/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Mon, 23 Jul 2012 17:46:25 GMT
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Thunderbird 3 Hangar, Tracy Island, February 23, 2068, 9:00a.m.

John had completed showing Callie the interior of Thunderbird 3 and was now showing the exterior. "What do you think?"

"This is a HUGE spaceship! So, when it's time to go, I'll use this to reach the space station?"

He nodded. "You won't spend three straight months at the space station, either. What we'll do is this: when we take Thunderbird 3 to the station, you and I will work together for a month. This will give you all the time you need to understand the controls. Afterward, it'll be Alan, followed by you, and then me."

"I get it. The sooner I follow Alan, the less the chance I'll forget what controls what."

"I should warn you, Callie. The controls are very complicated, but after a while they'll be second nature."

Callie nodded with excitement. "I believe you, John. Thanks for showing me this place. Is it true we'll go by means of the sofa?"

"Yes. We have two switching sofas so it appears nothing is missing."

"Clever."

"Any questions?"

"Nope. I think everything's been answered for me."

John smiled. "Great. Now, we need to get back to the lounge. I need to get ready to leave."

"To pick up other recruits?"

"Yeah, our British recruits."

Post by TracyFan4Ever on 27/06/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Mon, 23 Jul 2012 17:47:15 GMT
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Foxleyheath, February 2068

The day that Kat had been looking forward to with a degree of dread and excitement had arrived. Today Lady Penelope and Parker were taking her to Heathrow for her journey to Tracy Island.

Parker looked at the suitcases and boxes and said. "H'I don't know 'ow we are going to get all these boxes and luggage h'into the car, m'lady."

"Oh, Parker, don't fuss so, there will be plenty of room. I have taken far more on some of my visits in the past.

Eventually, with a lot of grunting and groaning from Parker, ably assisted by Lofty, FAB1 was packed and Kat squeezed into the back, surrounded by her belongings.

FAB1 sped through the countryside. Fields, villages flashed by, and suddenly as they neared London, the surrounding area became much more built up.

Arriving at Heathrow, Parker parked the Rolls outside one of the Terminals.

"'Ere, we h'are," he said, opening the doors for Lady Penelope and Kat. Kat scrambled out, clutching her guitar in her hand. Parker brought a trolley over and loaded the luggage and boxes. He headed to the hangar, where he knew the plane would be while Lady Penelope guided Kat to the departure lounge.

Christopher sat in the TI lounge, waiting for the new arrivals. He looked at a very miserable looking Asterix, who was in his carrying box.

"Mrrroww!!" Asterix tried to take a swipe at his master.

"Come on, mate." Christopher felt sorry for his little cat. "This will be a whole new start for us; don't you like that?"

Asterix ignored him, preferring to turn around and go to sleep.

Christopher sighed; he had packed with a heavy heart. Anna still invaded his thoughts. Still, he had discovered that all his possessions fitted neatly into two large packing cases.

Picking up his coffee, he leaned back in the plush chair and waited. He noticed a dark-skinned girl enter and gave her a nod and a smile.

Kat came into the waiting area. She looked at around and noticed a young woman no older than herself and a good-looking man.

"Do you suppose they are going to the same place as I am?" Kat whispered to Lady Penelope.

"I think it is more than likely," Lady Penelope replied.

Kat wandered over to the young woman and held out her hand. "Hi, I'm Kat Williamson. I guess we are heading for the same destination."

Nikki shook hands and added, "I'm Nikki and, yes, I guess we are."

"Isn't it exciting?" Kat went on. "I still can't believe that Mr Tracy wants a mechanic for his family fleet of vehicles, but Lady Penelope recommended me. I went for an interview, and now I am on my way."

Nikki smiled, "I still can't believe that I'll be working with the family on that beautiful island. But I must admit, I'll really miss my friends and family, along with my old job."

Nikki thought back to the family dinner her mother hosted the night before and the leaving party her friends threw her after her last day at the hospital.

"I'll also miss England, but then I guess the gorgeous weather on the Island will make up for that."

"So what was your job before you decided to work for Mr Tracy?" Kat asked.

"I was an A&E nurse at Chelsea and St Margaret's hospital. I'll be working as a nurse along with another for Dr. Tracy on the Island." Nikki adjusted her hair clip as it was hurting her head a bit.

Kat tilted her head slightly. Why would they need two nurses to work with the doctor on that Island? Are they accident-prone or something? she thought.

The dark haired young man wandered over. "Hi, I am Christopher Jordan, and the miserable cat in the carrier is Asterix. It looks like we are all going to Tracy Island."

"Hi, I'm Kat Williamson, and this is Nikki. I'm sorry, but I don't know your surname."

"Jackson, Nikki Jackson, pleased to meet you," she said and she shook his hand.

Just then the doors at the far end of the departure lounge opened, and in walked John Tracy and Tin-Tin Kyrano.

Christopher looked up as he saw Tin-Tin, a wide smile appearing on his face.

Kat smiled at John. "So, we meet again."

"Yes, indeed. Did you meet Tin-Tin Kyrano when you visited?" John replied with a grin. "Well, everyone seems to be here. Let's get your things loaded onto the jet." Without further ado, they followed John, Tin-Tin, and Parker out onto the tarmac. John and Parker loaded most of the luggage, assisted by Christopher.

Lady Penelope followed slowly after them. She was just beginning to realise that she was going to miss Kat very much indeed.

Once the entire luggage was stored away, they boarded the jet.

"Fasten your seatbelts and get ready for takeoff," John called from the cockpit.

Christopher looked at Kat as she sat there, waiting for the jet to take off. He smiled to himself; he felt the same when he went up in a plane for the first time.

He leaned over to her and squeezed her hand, "You'll be fine." Kat just nodded.

"Mroooowww." Asterix was looking out of his carrier; he was scared.

"I know you'll be fine too." With that, Christopher settled back for the trip.

Kat watched the earth move away as the jet headed upwards, the sudden ascent pushing her back into her seat. She remembered saying goodbye to Lady Penelope, who had had tears in her eyes. She smiled as she recalled all the happy hours she had spent working on her car, and Parker's funny ways. Her memory brought up the times spent shopping and attending some of Lady Penelope's parties. She thought sadly of her parents and brothers. Lady Penelope had assured her that her car would be safe at Foxleyheath. She hoped the new mechanic would be a good and faithful worker. She wiped away a sudden moistness from her own eyes.

Nikki looked at her. "Are you okay?"

Kat nodded, not sure of her voice.

"It's a big wrench, leaving everything that you have always known, isn't it?" Nikki said kindly.

"Yes." Kat replied, "I was just thinking of what I have left behind, but now I must look to my future."

"Hey, I believe there are refreshments on board. What say we look for something to eat and drink?" Nikki said, as she unbuckled her seat belt.

"Okay," Kat replied. "I have a low blood sugar problem. I don't want to pass out, that wouldn't give a very good impression, now would it?"

Post by TheWrongTrousers, Nikki-browneyes1 and Tawnyangel22 on 27/06/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out

Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Mon, 23 Jul 2012 17:48:32 GMT

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Tracy Island, 24th February 2068

"Tracy Island ahead, please fasten your seat belts for landing," Tin-Tin called from the cockpit. All three passengers fastened their belts and looked out of the windows as Tracy Island appeared.

This is it, thought Kat. This is where my life changes forever.

Tin-Tin taxied the plane to the end of the runway near the cliff. The doors were opened, Kat scrambled out still clutching her guitar.

"May I on behalf of my father, welcome you all to Tracy Island," John said.

All three of them followed him, struggling with some of their luggage, through a wide door and entered a large cargo style lift. The lift carried them up to a wide patio

Kat followed John. She looked around her. Everything was a blaze of colour. Plants, the like of which she had never known existed, blossomed everywhere. The tropical breeze swayed palm trees and looking into the distance, she saw a white, sandy beach.

"It's such a large island, but where are the fleet of vehicles I shall be helping with?" she asked John.

John responded. "I will show you them once you have had time to settle in and have a rest."

Grandma Tracy was there to welcome them. She looked at the other two already seated. Kyran had brought in some tea and refreshments. Suddenly Kat realised how hungry she was.

"Did you have a pleasant journey?" Grandma asked them. All three nodded and said yes they had.

Mrs. Tracy continued, "While you are having something to eat, let's take care of your living accommodations. All of you will have an apartment, located here in the Cliff House. It's furnished

with the basics and you'll each have an allowance to order what you like to change or add to what is there."

She brought out a small basket containing some key cards. "Please take one. This is the fairest way we could think up to hand out the apartments."

Each drew out a key and she took note of who had drawn which apartment.

"John, Tin-Tin and I will show you to your apartments now and help you with your luggage. I'm afraid my son is currently away on business, but as soon as he is back, he will give you a welcome tour and talk," she explained further.

Kat was shown to her apartment by Grandma and Kyrano followed shortly after with her luggage. "Please make yourself at home," Grandma said. "A tour of the island has been arranged for you once you have settled in and have had a rest."

"I thought Mr Tracy was going to show us all round, when he arrived back?" Kat asked.

"I have instructions that you are to be shown around as soon as you are settled in," was the reply.

Left on her own to unpack, Kat looked around the apartment. It was so roomy and airy. She went into the bedroom; the bed looked enormous. It was just as well that Lady Penelope had insisted on double sized sheets. She opened the windows onto the balcony and looked out at the blue sea shimmering in the heat. A row of palm trees lined a route down to the beach. It was so beautiful. She felt immensely happy that she had got this opportunity to work in such a wonderful location.

Reluctantly returning to the room and the business of unpacking, she began putting her things away. She had brought three suitcases of clothes, but they just looked lost in the dresser drawers and hanging space. She looked at her bib and brace overalls and wondered how soon she would need them. She hoped very soon; she was still curious about what kinds of vessels and aircraft she'd be working on and where they were kept.

Following a short rest, Kat showered and changed into something slightly cooler, a pair of shorts and a sleeveless T-shirt. She had just finished putting her things away and was exploring the kitchen cabinets when the door chimed. She walked over and pressed her hand into the scanner. The door slid open and John appeared.

"Oh, hi, are you going to show me around?"

"May I come in before I show you around? Father is sorry that he is unable to take you around himself and has asked me to show you instead."

"Okay," said Kat.

"Kat, before we go on the tour, there's something important I need to tell you," he began. "Although you have been recruited as a mechanic for our family fleet of vehicles, that is not the whole story. My family is also International Rescue."

Kat swallowed hard. International Rescue, she had heard of them, of the marvellous rescues they carried out, of the secrecy that surrounded them.

Kat looked hard at John. "Yes, I have."

"Well, my father is head of International Rescue and Tracy Island is the headquarters," John explained. "The work of International Rescue is increasing and Dad felt that the time was right to recruit more personnel. That's why you are here."

Post by Tawnyangel22 on 28/06/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out

Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Mon, 23 Jul 2012 17:49:23 GMT

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A pillow fight, an hour of panic packing Since when did I have all this extra crap? -- and a few hours sleep later, Dominic found himself waiting at the airbase for his ticket out of Kansas and to his new home and job.

International Rescue. I still can't believe it. If only me mam could see me now. Joshua had protested to the stroller, as he often did, and Dom decided to load some of the bags into it instead and carry the young boy in his arms. Josh blinked from behind his large round glasses and stared at his father. He knew something was up, Dom thought. Children were strangely perceptive, he had found.

So they waited until the time came, and he thought he caught a glimpse of a similar plane to the one he had been taken to the island in the first time land on the airstrip and taxi out of sight. They waited a few moments longer.

"Mr. Kelly." He heard a familiar voice say.

Dominic turned to see the auburn-haired brother walking towards him, a wide grin on his face, accompanied by a pretty young teen Cherry, he remembered.

"Please, call me Dom. You're Gordon if I remember correctly," he said.

"That I am. Now, are you ready to go? The plane is being refueled as we speak."

"Yes, we are. Aren't we, Josh?" The boy stared at Gordon for a few moments before breaking out in a grin. Dominic smiled and nodded at Gordon. "He must remember you."

"He should!" Gordon said. "We had a great time, didn't we, Joshua? Come on, then. Let's get your stuff loaded. We'll be picking up another new recruit, Brandon McCain, on our way." They moved off, and Gordon continued. "After that stop, I'd like for you to take over the flight. We normally double crew on these long flights, but because of the number of comings and goings, pilots are spread pretty thin right now."

"I'd be glad to." Dominic said. "Just let me familiarise the controls on the way there, then. Where are we headed?"

"Lindbergh Field Airport, San Diego."

Once the plane was ready, the gear was stowed and the passengers safely buckled in, they were on their way to pick up their last passenger.

Brandon stood in the terminal, waiting for the plane that would take him to Tracy Island and his new life. Leaving the things he was familiar with was difficult; leaving his family more so.

Mom, Dad, I'm sorry I had to lie to you, Brandon thought. Maybe in time I'll be able to tell you where I am and what I really do. His thoughts were interrupted by a voice calling out to him.

"Mr. McCain!" Brandon turned to see Gordon and a dark-haired man coming towards him.

He recognized Gordon from his trip to the island. "Hi, Gordon. Nice to see you again," Brandon replied, extending his hand. Gordon took it, shaking it firmly.

Gordon nodded and motioned to his companion. "This is one of our other new recruits, Dominic Kelly.

Dominic extended his hand, and the two men shook. "Pleased t' meet you."

"Pleased to meet you too, Mr. Kelly."

"Ah, please, call me Dom. Most folks do."

"Well," Gordon interjected, "we'd best be getting a move on." He went to take one of Brandon's bags.

Brandon slung his duffel bag over his shoulder and picked up the two remaining bags. Following Gordon and Dom to the plane, he stowed his stuff and entered the plane, taking his seat and fastening his seat belt.

Dominic sat in the pilot's seat, and Gordon in the co-pilot's. Dominic looked back before buckling his seat belt to check on his son. "How's he been?" he asked Cherry.

"Fine," the young girl answered with a smile. Dominic turned back and glanced over the controls.

"Ready to go?" Gordon asked.

"As ready as I'll ever be, I guess," he answered.

It didn't seem like long before Gordon was requesting permission to land on Tracy Island. Dominic felt his heart skip a beat. This was really it. Permission was granted, and Gordon turned to Dominic.

"Would you like me to do the landing?" he asked.

Dominic thought for a moment; it had been a while since he had landed a plane.

"No, I think I'm okay to do it." He manipulated the steering yoke, and brought them down carefully, though not as smoothly as a more skilled hand could have. I guess I'll have to get training again, Dominic thought.

"Hey Dom," Brandon said in a teasing voice, "Be careful, will ya?" He looked at Joshua, who wasn't fazed in the least by his father's less than smooth landing.

Dominic threw a wry grin Brandon's way, and got up to let Gordon take over. When the plane was stationary and the ramp deployed, Dominic went back and unbuckled a sleepy Joshua, taking the child up in his arms.

Brandon stepped out of the plane, feeling the sun on his shoulders and smelling the aroma of the tropical flowers that decorated the Island. He turned to Gordon. "What next?"

They entered a large cargo lift, and Joshua started as it began to rise. The young child soon dozed back off, and the lift opened and left them off on a wide patio area, where they were met by Kyrano and Grandma.

"We shall allocate your apartments first, so you may put your things away and begin to settle in." Kyrano said.

"Considering your special circumstances," she motioned to Joshua, "we're allocating you a two-bedroom apartment. You just have to choose which one. Go ahead."

Dominic reached into the basket and picked one of them out. He showed it to Emily, who noted which one it was.

She held out the basket to Brandon. He reached in, picking out one of the remaining keys, showing it to Emily.

"Well then, we'd best get you all settled in," Kyrano said.

She and Kyrano showed the two men to their respective apartments. Dominic gave Cherry a grateful smile as she helped him bring his bags into the room, and he set his sleepy child down on the first bed he came across.

Brandon followed Emily to his apartment. Thanking her for her help, he took his bags and set them down. After exploring his new accommodations went out onto the balcony to take in the view.

I wonder who my 'neighbor' is? Brandon thought. A noise to his right made him turn and look.

"No way! Not him!" Brandon groaned inwardly.

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Mon, 23 Jul 2012 17:49:51 GMT
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Tracy Island 24th February 2068.

Christopher yawned widely, looking around to see that the boxes containing his belongings were there.

"Mrriaowww?" a plaintive noise came from the carrying case.

"Asterix!" Christopher rushed over and opened the case, letting the cat out.

Asterix leapt off the bed, and began to explore the room.

"This is where you will be living from now on." Christopher smiled. "We'd better find out where you can and can't go."

Christopher bent down and picked Asterix up. The little cat purred and licked his master's face.

"Shall we go for a walk?" Christopher asked.

"Mrrroww!!" Asterix mewed.

"Let's go then," Christopher said, and they went out of the room to explore their new surroundings.

Post by TheWrongTrousers on 28/06/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Mon, 23 Jul 2012 17:52:26 GMT
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Christopher carried Asterix all the way from his Cliff House apartment over to the Villa, taking the monorail and the lift up to the house. He walked along the corridor to the lounge, whistling a happy tune and stroking a very nervous and nosy young cat.

"This is nice." He tickled Asterix's chin; the cat purred.

A set of footsteps behind him caught his attention. He turned around to say hello and was face to face with Brandon.

Christopher's happy face was replaced with a little more seriousness. He looked at Brandon, "Brandon? Nice to see you; have you settled in yet?"

"I haven't completely settled in yet. I'm taking time to get used to the layout of the place."

"This is Asterix." Christopher's expression relaxed. "He's nervous so I'm taking him for a walk round."

"How old is he?" Brandon asked, admiring the cat's markings. He started to put his hand out to scratch Asterix's ears. The cat let out a low growl, swiping at the intruding appendage.

"He's a year old." Christopher tickled the cat's ears to calm him down. "Sorry about that. He does that to people he doesn't know."

"Does it take him long to get used to people?"

Christopher turned around and looked at Brandon, any pretense of humour disappearing from his eyes and face. "It depends," he said. "He is very picky with who he likes."

"I'll keep that in mind. Anything else I should know about Asterix?"

"No, nothing really," Christopher said, "He will find out about you, but I suggest locking your door. He likes to explore."

"Thanks for the advice," Brandon said as Christopher turned, going into the lounge.

After taking a walk around, learning where things were located, Brandon went back to his apartment to finish unpacking. He did so slowly, his thoughts going back to his encounter with Christopher. What's he got in mind? He seemed nice enough, but I'm not so sure. Better stay on your toes, McCain.

Post by TheWrongTrousers & MagicMaster8 29/06/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Mon, 23 Jul 2012 22:59:11 GMT
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Kat was silent following this piece of news.

She opened the French windows leading to the balcony and John followed her. Resting her arms on the edge, she asked, "And just when were you intending to drop this bombshell on Nikki and Christopher?"

John was silent. Without turning to face him she said in a quiet voice, "They already know, don't they?"

She turned to face him. "I'm right aren't I, they know already?"

John nodded. "It was never my father's intention to tell them until they had accepted. But Nikki

asked why did we need two nurses to help our doctor and felt he had to show her why."

Kat paced up and down. "Oh, I must have sounded so naïve talking to them on the plane coming down here. How thrilled I was getting a job as a mechanic and all the while they knew exactly what was happening."

John tried to stop her pacing, but she brushed him away.

"No, let me think, this has come as quite a shock. It's not so much knowing what happens here, as the fact that I didn't merit the courtesy of being told sooner," she said in a hurt voice. "Where does Lady Penelope fit into all this? No don't tell me. She knows all about it as well, doesn't she? No wonder she knew exactly what size of bedding I would need and what the apartments were like." John explained that Lady Penelope was their London Agent, and abided by the strict secrecy that surrounded International Rescue.

"So that explains some of her mysterious disappearances." Kat tried to keep her voice steady. "So why, when I have worked for her for four years, and we have become good friends, and Lady Penelope recommended me, was I not told at my interview? After all I must have been trustworthier than the others. Your father did know my background; we had met at Lady Penelope's New Year's Eve party. I was better known than the others."

He stared at this small angry looking young woman, tears threatening to fall from under her long lashes, and something inside him rose up in protest. He folded his arms and straightened.

"Hey!" When she turned her startled attention to him, he continued. "Listen to me, Kat, and listen good. You're not here to work on the Thunderbirds. You're here to repair and maintain the boats and planes and maybe some of the other equipment. If you think it's wrong that we didn't tell you before, think about this. Dianne, my stepmom, a physician who is sworn by various oaths to keep quiet on medical matters, wasn't told for six weeks after she moved to the island. Six. Weeks. She only found out because I got injured and she had to operate on me. Boy, was she ever hopping mad, and she had a right to be because she had children to think of."

"Dianne's mom, Grandma Parkhurst, who I think you haven't met yet, wasn't told for a long time after her first visit. We hid IR's existence from her... or so we thought." He huffed out a chuckle. "Turned out she'd found out on her own but kept it a secret." He unfolded his arms, spreading his hands palms up. "Hell, my dad has friends he hasn't told! Even Dianne's uncle, a man Dad has known for years, doesn't know about IR!"

He went over to her and held her arms and looked down at her. "The fact is, if we're not telling family members -- some of whom we've known far, far longer than you -- when they visit, why should we tell you?"

He jerked his head toward the balcony. "The others? They're here to work for IR. Their positions with the family or with the company are mostly cover stories. They had a right to know what they were getting into. Our telling you at all has to do with fairness and convenience. It's easier for you to know -- no matter when -- than for us to keep hiding it." He paused, giving her a chance to speak. The pause lengthened, then he spoke again. "If it's any consolation, Dad insisted on a tour as soon as you arrived, as a way of apologizing for not letting you know sooner."

Again there was a long silence. Kat turned away once more to look at the ocean. Yes, she was annoyed that she hadn't been told at her interview like the others had, but on the other hand, she had been accepted. Lady Penelope's hands, to a certain extent, had been tied, and she had gone out of her way to recommend her and help her with furnishings for the apartment. The others seemed nice and friendly. And, as much as she hated to admit it, she could understand the reasoning behind Mr. Tracy's decision. She glanced back at John, who was looking at her expectantly. Yes, I think I should like to stay. I would like to be friends with them all, but particularly John.

She turned back to where he was standing, watching her. Looking up at him with the beginnings of a smile, she said, "Did you say that I would be given a tour? Then let's get going."

John breathed a sigh of relief and smiled. "Then you will stay?"

"Yes, I will stay, but please no more secrets."

John nodded. "I think we can agree to that." He offered his arm. "So, let's get on with the tour."

They took the elevator down to the vestibule but instead of heading back out through the common areas to the patio, John took her out through the door at the end of the small waiting area. It opened up into a huge room. Kat gasped at the size of it.

"This is Thunderbird Two's hangar. It's not here right now because it's out on a rescue." Kat couldn't help but hear the worry in John's voice.

"Which of your brothers are on the mission?" she asked softly.

"Scott, and Virgil. Mom went along, too. Brains is holding down the command desk," he explained, his tone distracted.

"It sounds serious," Kat said, looking at him keenly.

"It is serious. It's always serious," John replied. He squared his shoulders and showed her to a monorail car.

"This monorail line is a branch off the main monorail, but a direct access to the lift that will take us up to the Villa. We'll follow the monorail down here first and then go up to the Villa later," he explained as the car took them through a small tunnel into the pod bay. "Here are the pods that Thunderbird Two uses to carry the auxiliary equipment as well as Thunderbirds Four and Seven. Pod Five is gone right now, as is the Mole. Brains may want to familiarize you with the auxiliary equipment later."

"It's so big and impressive!" Kat exclaimed. They came to the junction with the main monorail and John maneuvered the car onto it.

"I'll have to show you the planes later. They're kept in a wing off to the opposite side of Thunderbird Two's hangar from the pod bay."

The monorail made its way around a bend and began to climb. As they passed a large door and a set of stairs, John said, "That's the entrance to the lab, Brains's domain. It's a huge place and it has a repair bay for the auxiliary machines and the smaller Thunderbirds. You'll be spending quite a bit of time there."

"I'm looking forward to that," Kat said, her voice showing her excitement.

The monorail continued upwards and as it turned a corner, Kat could see a well-lighted building sitting back within a cavern. "What's that?" she asked.

"Our power plant. Runs the whole complex," John explained quickly. "The sewage treatment plant is beyond it in the lava tubes. The water desalination plant is beyond the lab. We used the lava tubes from this extinct volcano as much as we could. Saved a lot of excavation."

"That sounds sensible," Kat commented as the monorail entered a short, well-lit tunnel.

The tunnel opened up into another huge room, empty of any large pieces of equipment but impressive nonetheless. John smiled.

"This is Thunderbird One's launch bay. See that large opening over there? It's the bottom of a ramp to Thunderbird One's hangar. An automatic system brings the rocket plane down from there once Scott's on board. But you'll never guess what's above us."

Kat looked out the window of the monorail and looked upwards towards the roof. She came back in and gave John a puzzled look. "I don't know. What's above us?"

"The swimming pool," John said with a grin.

Kat gasped, then began to laugh. "You are joking!"

"No, I'm not. When Thunderbird One takes off, the pool draws aside and makes an opening for it."

Kat continued to laugh, "I won't believe it until I see it!" John joined her in her laughter.

The monorail continued through Thunderbird One's hangar, where John pointed out the light sconces high up on the one wall and told Kat where they led. She shook her head; it was all so hard to believe.

"Now, at the next stop, we get out and let you take a look at some of the vehicles you'll be working on at first," John told her. The little car came out into a large cavern that smelled of the sea. It was well lit, as everything else had been.

"Oh, my!" Kat breathed, "These are awesome!"

Kat looked at the seaplane, gently bobbing on the swell, at the boats moored alongside. "I shall have to help with these?" she asked incredulously. John nodded.

"This will be your domain. Or at least part of it."

She excitedly plied John with question after question, about the boats, asking some very technical questions that impressed him. Well, sounds like she really knows what she's doing, he thought to himself.

After she had looked at each and every boat, including the yacht, and had a good look at the seaplane, John coaxed her back into the monorail. "We need to finish our tour," he reminded her.

"Oh, yes! Of course," she said, blushing at being caught by her excitement over the boat pen. They got back into the monorail and headed along. There was a branch in the railway and John took it. The tunnel opened up to a large silo.

"This is Thunderbird Three," John said with a modicum of pride. "Our one space-going craft. Allows us to do rescues in space and on the moon and is our link to Thunderbird Five, our space station."

"Will I get to see Thunderbird Five some time?" Kat asked, looking with interest at the red rocket ship.

"Maybe. Depends on what Dad has in store for everyone."

They made one circuit around the silo and John explained that they were below the Round House and that the rocket ship entered and exited the launch pad through the center of the guest house. Kat laughed at that, too, but then wondered aloud how guests weren't alerted to the departure of the space ship when the building was occupied.

"When there are people here who don't know about IR, we go into Operation: Cover Up," John explained. "It was really tough at Dad and Dianne's wedding because there were so many guests. All of us prayed for days that there would be no emergencies then. Someone must have heard us because there were no emergency calls until after the guests were gone."

The monorail car now went back out into the tunnel and came out at the far end of the pod bay. Kat's face became thoughtful as they passed by the auxiliary equipment and the pods.

"You've told me about Thunderbirds One through Five, and a little about Thunderbird Seven. Where and what is Thunderbird Six?"

John laughed. "Thunderbird Six is a rebuilt Tiger Moth biplane. We use it if we need to put something lightweight on another flying vehicle. It's Brains's pride and joy, and the one Thunderbird you can count on maintaining."

"A Tiger Moth? I've heard of them, but have never seen one. I'll be interested to see it."

John maneuvered the monorail just past the connection to the Cliff House and the lift and stopped at the entrance to Thunderbird Two's bay. They took the lift down, and had made it to the floor when the cliff door began to open. John took Kat by the wrist and ran for the jet bay, pulling her along behind him. Her eyes widened as she saw Thunderbird Two back into its position.

"Wow!" she shouted over the noise of the engines. They suddenly cut off, and there was quiet again. John looked back at her wide-eyed stare and grinned.

"Impressive, isn't it? Scott must be late getting back or else he probably would have been in the launch bay or hangar when we went through." John tugged her arm. "Come on. Let me introduce you to the planes."

John led Kat to where the family planes and jets were. Again she asked many questions, and again he was impressed by her knowledge and obvious ability. I think Dad made the right decision in recruiting her, he thought to himself.

Kat turned to John. "This is going to take a lot of getting used to."

"I know. But I think you're up to the challenge," John assured her. His watch telecomm went off and Grandma's picture appeared.

"The boys and Dianne are back and it's time for some supper. You and Kat come on up to the dining room now."

"Yes, Grandma," John said, rolling his eyes a bit. He grinned and he and Kat walked across the hangar bay to the lift and up to the monorail.

"Maybe you can show me the stars, some night. I know most of the constellations in the Northern Hemisphere, but I'd like to know all about the ones in the Southern Hemisphere," Kat asked as they took the second lift to the Villa proper. John agreed that he would show her.

After dinner, Kat went back to her apartment and John walked down to the pool. Cherry climbed out of the pool and flopped down beside her elder brother. "Well, how did Kat take the news?"

"She was shocked and upset, and for a moment I thought she was going to demand to be taken back home. But after I explained a few home truths to her and she recovered from the shock she decided to stay." He paused, then added, "And I for one am glad she is staying, I think she is very nice and would make a good member of the team."

"Oooooooh," Cherry said, and laughed, then added, "I am glad she has decided to stay, too. Now I have someone else, other than the grandmas and my brothers, that I'm taller than."

"Yeah, but I'm taller, and bigger, and stronger than you, and for that crack, little sister, I'm going to dunk you in the pool!" John cried as he swiftly grabbed Cherry around the waist and, dragging her kicking and screaming, threw her into the pool.

Post by Tikatu and Tawnyangel22 on 29/06/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Mon, 23 Jul 2012 23:07:06 GMT

The apartment was big; that was for sure. Dominic let his eyes roam around his new home with a combination of shock and awe. International Rescue went all out on their recruits, it seemed. He ran his fingers over the bare surfaces and felt elation build up in his chest. It was a blank canvas. At last, he would be able to decorate a place to his tastes, not his mother's, or his roommate's. His. A keening sound brought his attention back into the first bedroom; Joshua, despite being tired from the long journey, was now awake.

"Alright, big fella?" Dom said as he sat down on the bed.

Joshua reached out for his father, and Dominic obliged, picking the child up.

"Shall we go explore, Jak? I think we should."

They both glanced around at their surroundings with wide eyes, and Dominic encouraged Joshua's babbling as they went. They reached what Grandma had termed the Villa via the monorail and a lift, and Dom walked slowly into the largest room, whistling at the beautiful décor. He grinned as he spotted the piano in the corner.

"That's something you won't be going near, I promise you," he said to Joshua. "I can see it now: me losing this job because you got jam handprints all over what looks like a very expensive piano."

The child began squirming, and Dominic took this as an indication he wanted down from his arms. He toddled about the room, pointing and naming various objects. Dominic followed close behind. His ears perked up as the sound of powerful jet engines came from the distance, eventually roaring somewhere out of his vision before stopping altogether. I'll bet that's one of those Thunderbird craft, he thought.

"Dominic?" Grandma appeared in the doorway. "It's time for some supper. Come on down to the dining room."

Joshua walked over to the elderly woman and stared up at her. Before long, he was reaching up, and she chuckled as she obliged and picked him up.

"Grama," he said.

"Smart kid." Emily said. "You can call me Gramma all you want." She grinned at Dominic. "I've been looking after kids for nigh on fifty years. And I can't get enough of them."

"I was never a kid person myself till this little fella came along," Dominic admitted. "But now, I love 'em."

Emily nodded, and then brushed some of Joshua's bright blond hair from his eyes.

"Well now, let's see what Gramma can get for you then, hmm?"

Dominic shook his head and grinned as he followed her down to the dining room.

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Mon, 23 Jul 2012 23:10:18 GMT
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Date: Saturday, February 25th, Time: 8 p.m., Place: Tracy Island

"Mmmmm," Dianne moaned as her mother rubbed and massaged her shoulders. "That feels good."

"You're very tense, Di." Lisa Parkhurst's thumbs rubbed over a particularly knotty muscle, smoothing it down into relaxation. "How did the rescue go?"

"Pretty well. Mine collapse outside of Kiev. Ten people missing. We pulled out six survivors and four bodies," Dianne explained as she rolled her shoulders then let her mother move in again to massage more. "I'm glad we found them all and quickly, too. Virgil was really tired from all the extra work the boys put in to finish the monorail extension." She smiled. "Maybe you should offer him your services as a masseuse."

"Perhaps I will," Lisa said off-handedly.

"Are the new recruits settling in?"

"Seem to be. No loud arguments about the accommodations. I think they're still all awestruck."

"Probably. Did John tell Kat?"

"Yes, he did. Took her on the tour. Cherry passed on the word that Kat's staying."

"Good. We need her."

The two women were silent for a while as Lisa continued to erase the tension from her daughter's shoulders.

"When is Jeff due back?"

"Sometime tomorrow, I hope. It's still Friday in the States, I think. This time zone and International Date Line stuff is hard to keep track of."

Lisa chuckled. "You're telling me? I'm always just about to pick up the phone when suddenly I have to stop and think: what time is it there and is it tomorrow yet?"

The two women laughed. Dianne turned to her mother.

"I see you've already buzzed the boys' hair."

"Yes, I have. Sometimes, I think that the only reason you haul me out here is to cut and style the family's hair."

"What? What makes you think that? You've got a beau out here, or don't you remember?"

"I remember. That's why I said, 'Sometimes'."

They laughed together again and Dianne got up from the sitting room sofa.

"I think a soak in the Jacuzzi is in order. Oh, I can hardly wait for tomorrow."

Lisa reached out and embraced her daughter. "I know. He'll be home as soon as he can, Dianne."

"Yes, he will. It's just hard to wait when I miss him so."

Lisa headed for the door. "I think that I'll check in on Virgil and Scott and see if they could use some loosening up. Goodnight, Dianne."

"Goodnight, Ma," Dianne said as she headed for her bathroom and the soothing Jacuzzi.

Post by Tikatu on 30/06/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out

Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Mon, 23 Jul 2012 23:14:30 GMT

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Christopher passed through the lounge, Asterix sniffing at things and mewing. They came out into early evening sunshine.

Cherry had come back out on the patio, still damp from being dunked in the pool. She spotted Christopher and more importantly, the cat in his arms.

"Oooh, what a cute kitty!" she cooed, walking up to Christopher. "Is it a he or a she? What's its name?"

"His name is Asterix," Christopher said, "and he's a little nervous." Asterix craned his neck to sniff at Cherry and mewed.

"Would you like to hold him?" Christopher smiled, "Just be a little careful."

"Oooh, I'd love to!" Cherry said, carefully taking him from Christopher's grasp and holding the cat close, stroking his head.

"Oh, what a sweetie!" she gushed. She turned to her brothers, who were playing on the fort down at the ground level. "Hey, guys! Come see the kitty!" Alex and Tyler immediately abandoned their play and stormed up the stairs to their sister.

Christopher smiled and walked down to the table at the side of the pool. He smiled at the assembled people there.

"He'll be fine," he said before sitting down. "He seems to get on well with children."

"Looks like," Scott said, sipping a cold drink. "Is he litter box trained?"

"He is very well trained." Christopher bristled slightly. "He's a good boy. I'll keep him in my rooms," he said, "but he does get out sometimes."

"Just as long as he's mainly a house cat," Scott replied. "Wouldn't want him to get stuck somewhere in the complex where he couldn't get out."

"Or run into something dangerous to him," added John.

"I understand." Christopher relaxed. "Thank you for being so understanding. I was worried about how he would acclimatise to a new environment. And how I would acclimatise too." Christopher smiled. "I'm liking it so far."

Scott smiled back. "We're glad you like the apartments."

"I don't think Asterix likes Brandon much though," Christopher chuckled, looking around. "Where is Tin-Tin?"

"I think Brains hauled her off to the lab for some more design work. She's working on a new uniform fabric and is close to a breakthrough," John explained.

"I'd like to catch up with her again," Christopher said. "We had a good chat on the plane the last time."

"I'm impressed with Brains, too," he continued, "Extraordinary mind."

"Yep. We wouldn't have our Thunderbirds without him," Scott said, stretching.

"May I have a drink please?" Christopher asked. "And could I have some water for Asterix too?"

"Sure. Will lemonade do? I've got a pitcher of it over here," John offered. He called into his telecomm. "Cherry? Can one of you three get a bowl of water for Asterix the cat? And I think you'd better return him to Mr. Jordan now, too."

"FAB," came Cherry's disappointed voice. "I'll get the water. Ty is coming down with the kitty now."

Tyler came carefully down the stairs, holding tightly onto Asterix so the cat couldn't wriggle out of his grasp. "Here he is, Mr. Jordan. He's really cute!"

"I'm sure that your Mum and Dad will let you look after him every so often," Christopher said as he took Asterix from Tyler. "He knows he's cute, he uses that to his advantage every time."

Scott reached out a hand to try and stroke the cat, but Asterix hissed and swatted out with a claw-filled paw.

"Feisty little devil, isn't he?"

"I'd give it time." Christopher calmed the cat down. "I got him from a rescue home when he was about a few months old, abandoned by his Mum. He's still a little wild." Christopher tickled behind Asterix's ears, then swigged from his glass.

"Hmm. I just hope he's not so feisty around Dominic's little one. Kids Joshua's age tend to think that 'kitty' equals 'toy', and act accordingly," John commented. He looked up to see Cherry carefully carrying a small bowl of water down the steps to the pool.

"He'll love little Joshua," Christopher said, grinning. "You'll see. My next-door neighbour had a little baby girl who loved him. And thank you, Cherry." Christopher smiled at the girl. "He'll love you even more for that."

"You're welcome, Mr. Jordan," Cherry replied. She looked up to see Lisa coming out to the pool.

"Hi, Grandma P," she said. "Look, Mr. Jordan has a kitty! His name is Asterix."

"Hello again." Christopher smiled as Asterix began lapping up the water. "Forgive his rudeness but he is rather thirsty."

"He's a cute one," Lisa said simply. She walked behind Scott and began to rub his shoulders. He turned around and gave her a strange look.

"To what do I owe the pleasure of this massage?" he asked.

"You and Dianne and Virgil all went out on that rescue today and probably need some loosening up," she replied.

"Oh. Then by all mean, Grandma, loosen away!" Scott said with a grin.

Post by TheWrongTrousers and Tikatu on 30/06/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Mon, 23 Jul 2012 23:17:49 GMT
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February 25th, New York City

The rain had turned to drizzle, causing a fine mist to descend over the city. Low grey clouds made the morning seem even more miserable and the chill of the wind up on the helipad of Tracy Industries was not helping Elise feel any warmer. She had been up there for 45 minutes, going over her boss's private helijet with kid gloves. She had already flown it from the fleet hangar at

Kennedy Airport, and felt as nervous as a rookie pilot doing so! This was an exceptional chopper! The sleek design of the frame and advanced high-tech interior and engine made it one of a kind. It's rich black color and silver TI logo distinguished it from any other of its kind. Pulling her jacket closer to her, she went into the pilot's ready room and poured a cup of coffee. She had just started to sip it, when Jeff, wrapped up equally warm, entered the room.

"I'd say Good Morning, but judging by the weather, I don't think it is."

Elise smiled at him. "I agree Mr. Tracy. Let's hope any storms that Doppler has indicated along the Eastern seaboard hold off until we get back."

Making their way to the chopper they quickly boarded and settled in. Jeff handed Elise the flight plans and they discussed briefly where they would land once they reached the area he wanted to look at.

"Are you sure this is where you want to go?" Elise asked, feeling a little uneasy.

"Yes Elise, Black Mountain has some prime property located on it and my sources tell me it's just what I've been looking for."

"Okay then! Let's go." She called local air traffic control, was given clearance, and took off into the drizzle and mist.

Flying north-northeast, Elise made sure she kept a close eye on the weather conditions. Jeff was in the back passenger seats where he had enough room to spread out some paperwork he had brought along to work on. The further north they went, the harder it had started to rain.

"Mr. Tracy, sir?" He glanced up from his reading.

"Yes, Elise, what is it?"

"Just want to let you know we are about 35 minutes from landing."

"Thank you, Elise. Would you please let me know when you're ready to put down?"

"Yes sir," came the reply. It was a little difficult to see the landing site, which was nestled amongst the trees of Black Mountain, but it was big enough to land on without a problem. Mainly used for emergencies, the helipad also served as a base for the owners of the cabins to land at. Most of the homes were located further up the mountain. Jeff had arranged for an SUV to be waiting for him and it was there, ready with keys in the ignition. Turning to Elise, Jeff spoke. "Elise, I would like you to accompany me, as I need a woman's opinion on this!"

Elise shot him a look of surprise. "Really?"

"Yes, really. You see, I plan on buying my wife a hideaway cabin as a late Valentine's Day gift. Somewhere just the two of us can escape to. But I want her to feel at home here, make it her home, actually, which is where you come in. Being female, I thought you'd give me an honest opinion about the place."

He looked sincerely at Elise and she simply answered, "I'll do my best, Mr. Tracy."

She climbed into the passenger side of the vehicle and Jeff took command of the driver seat. It was mid-morning when they set off.

Post by FrankieCTB2 on 01/07/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Mon, 23 Jul 2012 23:21:57 GMT
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Date: Sunday, February 26, 2068; Time 7 a.m.; Place: Tracy Island

Dianne reached for the vidphone in her sitting room. She was wearing her favorite satin chemise, and only that, and sat with her feet drawn up on the overstuffed chair. She dialed a number she knew very well.

It's 2 in the afternoon on Saturday, she thought as she dialed. He should be finished with lunch and be ready for a surprise call.

The vidphone in New York rang and rang, until finally the automatic answering service picked up. Jeff's face, slightly smiling, appeared and his deep voice rang out.

"You've reached my private penthouse number, but unfortunately, I'm not at home. I'm not here either. Sorry about that. Leave me a message and I will get back to you just as soon as I get in. And if it's you, my sweet Dianne, even sooner. Have a good day!"

Dianne mock-pouted as she left her message. "Now, my love, I thought for certain you'd be at the penthouse just pining away for me. But then, maybe you found a way to get home to me even sooner than I expect you to. That would be a wonderful surprise! In any case, I miss you more than words can say and I'll try back in a few hours. After I shower.... sliding my chemise over my head or maybe dropping it on the floor... or I could take a bubble bath in the Jacuzzi with that jasmine vanilla you like so much... then there's drying off... and choosing my clothes... and putting them on... just a little something for your imagination to work with, dearest. Love you more than life. Bye-bye." She smiled a sultry smile and gave him a tiny wave before she disconnected the call.

She showered (that being the speedier alternative) and dressed and padded out barefoot to get some breakfast. Scott was at the table, reading the sports pages. Kyrano asked her what she would like.

"Two poached eggs on buttered wheat toast and an orange juice, please, Kyrano." The retainer smiled and went to make her breakfast. She poured herself a cup of coffee, added a goodly dollop of her favorite flavored creamer, and sat down at the table.

"Have you heard from your father, Scott?" she asked. "I called a little bit ago and he wasn't at the penthouse. I thought maybe he'd left a message earlier."

Scott didn't even put down his paper. "No, Mom. No message." Dianne looked up as Nikki came into the dining room, looking rather sleepy and confused.

"Am I supposed to come here for meals, or should I prepare my own in my apartment? That wasn't made too clear the other day," she asked bluntly. Dianne smiled and indicated that the young woman should sit next to her.

"Well, that depends on what you'd like to do. If you would like, you can eat your meals either wholly here, or you can eat some meals in your apartment and some here, or you can eat your meals wholly in your apartment. It's up to you. Whatever you do, for lunch and dinner, tell Kyrano if you will be there so he'll make enough. And for breakfast, try and come down before say, 8:30 on regular days so he knows you've eaten. On days where we have rescues, expect to debrief around the table and probably eat your meals at the oddest hours." Dianne smiled as Kyrano brought her breakfast out. He turned to Nikki.

"Ms. Jackson, what would you like for breakfast?"

Nikki was unaccustomed to such service, but she shyly told Kyrano what she wanted. He nodded and left, after pointing out the coffee and tea dispensers on the sideboard.

Scott folded up his paper and smiled at Nikki. "Mom, I think I'll check with the hangar at La Guardia. See if Dad caught a corporate jet out. He might need to be picked up in LA or something."

"Good idea, Scott," Dianne said, swallowing her mouthful of egg and toast. "Check with the security service, too, and see if he went out today. I'm curious where he might have gone."

"Trying to deduce if he bought you a gift?" Scott asked cheekily.

Dianne rolled her eyes. "Go on with you now," she said, making a shooing motion. Scott laughed and headed upstairs.

First, he called Flight Control at the Tracy building, but no one answered. Then the hangar at La Guardia.

"No, Mr. Scott. Mr. Tracy didn't fly out of here today. Though his private helijet was taken up to the helipad this morning." Saul Rabinowitz, the hangar supervisor told him. "I hope he didn't fly out today; there's a nasty blizzard coming our way from the northeast."

"Thanks, Saul. Please let me know if you hear from him."

"Sure thing, Mr. Scott."

Scott sat down and made his last phone call; to the security people to see if Jeff had gone out and about in a limo. No, they said, Mr. Tracy didn't order the limo this morning. The oldest Tracy son sat back in his father's chair and tapped a stylus on his chin. I wonder where he is? I hope he didn't go flying today; that blizzard sounds like bad news. If I don't hear from him in the next

couple of hours, maybe I'll check with Alan and see if he can find Dad's telecomm signal.

Post by Tikatu on 01/07/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out

Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Mon, 23 Jul 2012 23:25:50 GMT

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Black Mountain, New Hampshire,

It was still raining when the vehicle carrying Jeff and Elise pulled onto the private roadway leading to the cabin. The main road up the mountain hadn't been too difficult, but this smaller road took a little more navigation.

When the cabin came into sight Elise saw it first and exclaimed, "Oh, it's gorgeous!"

Jeff looked out of the window and smiled as he put the SUV into park, and they both walked towards the cabin. The property was listed as a Maine Cottage. A-framed in shape, it was nestled among tall evergreens and had a built-on lookout deck. Unlocking the door with the keys the realtor had given him, Jeff allowed Elise to enter first. She gave a low whistle upon stepping into the foyer. The cabin was built from knotty pine and had a huge fieldstone fireplace in the main living area. Hardwood floors and floor to ceiling windows gave the cabin a spacious feel. Jeff looked around slowly, occasionally jotting down a note or two. Elise found the kitchen and was impressed by the very modern conveniences. The cabin had every comfort one would need! The two of them spent a good hour nosing around and admiring the breathtaking view from the deck.

"So, Ms. Collins, what do you think? I want an honest opinion now."

She looked over at him, thinking how much his stance and tone was very much like Scott's. "Well... I think it's absolutely perfect! I think your wife will adore this place."

Jeff smiled and agreed with her. "I think you may be right, and I hope she adores me just as much when I bring her here!"

Elise laughed out loud. "What are you laughing about?" Jeff asked casually.

"You sound just like Scott!"

He looked at her in playful astonishment "You can't be serious! My son acting just like me...never!"

Elise smiled. She liked Mr. Tracy, and could see where Scott had inherited his finer points. Her boss seemed to genuinely care about his employees and treated them very personably, and she felt quite honored that he valued her opinion on such an important decision. Noticing the time, she mentioned that they had better start heading back to the chopper. Jeff had earlier told her he wanted to be back in New York so that he could vid-phone home. The trip down the mountain was uneventful and all too soon they were lifting off to return home.

Jeff was already signing the purchase agreement when Elise lifted off. "Mr. Tracy? Weather station just radioed in -- strong winds are possible along with a thunderstorm cell off to the west. I'll keep my eye on it, but you may want to put your seatbelt on, if you haven't already done so, sir." She didn't look back, but spoke through the headphones that connected to the rear cabin speakers.

"Thank you, Elise. Will do," Jeff replied as he glanced out of the window, observing the changing clouds. He really wanted to be back in New York on time; he knew his family and his beloved wife would be waiting for his call. The thought of Dianne brought a soft smile to his face. Boy! How he'd missed her. Missed her smile, her touch, her kiss. He couldn't wait to show her the cabin. He hoped that they would be able to get away soon. Just the thought of the two of them alone in the cabin made his body stir and, suddenly, he couldn't wait to get home.

While Jeff was lost in thought, Elise's mind was as sharp as a tack. Her eyes traveled expertly over the instrument panel, reading wind speeds, fuel consumption, and height. The wind speed had picked up, but the chopper was handling it with ease. The controls felt light in her hands as she maneuvered them accordingly and the aircraft responded. As they flew southwards, the storm cell from the west was rapidly approaching. The rain had started and air traffic control had advised them to change course slightly. Elise did so, all the while relaying information back to Jeff. She was used to flying in bad weather and had many times successfully landed without problems after navigating storms, so she wasn't worried. Twenty-five minutes later, she was.

Post by FrankieCTB2 on 01/07/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Mon, 23 Jul 2012 23:34:24 GMT
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Elise had never seen anything like it in all of her years as a pilot. The ominous storm had gained speed, strength and power and loomed directly ahead. Scanning the latest weather report on the instrument panel, Elise drew in a sharp breath.

Jeff heard it, "What's wrong Elise?"

She answered him without turning round, "It seems that storm straight ahead is the front of a severe ice storm, possible heavy snow also. I'm afraid we may be in for a rough ride. Wind speed is outrageous; I've never seen anything this bad."

"Is there any way we can avoid it?" he asked. The pilot in him was already thinking ahead.

"I've thought about it, but this thing is too big and moving too fast, we'd be caught in it no matter what we do. I can try to gain altitude to fly above the brunt of it, but it's not going to be easy. Even with this top-of-the-line baby, it's going to be rough."

This time, she turned briefly to look at him as she spoke. Jeff caught her eyes and the look of doubt and worry in them. He trusted her flying skills, but still felt the need to ask if she needed help up front. She'd told him no thanks, and He had accepted that. It didn't stop him from worrying

though, as he looked out at what was now, dark, menacing swirling grey masses of clouds.

Suddenly, the chopper veered to the left and lost altitude, momentarily stunning its occupants. Elise quickly regained control, feeling the blades rotate with more difficulty. What had started as rain now became ice, and the tapping noise it made on the aircraft became louder. The roar of the winds magnified the sound to deafening. Jeff had yelled something to Elise, but she couldn't understand him. Even with the high-tech headsets, their voices were drowned out by the elements outside.

The weather became more severe as Elise tried to gain more altitude. It wasn't long before they were flying into the thick of it. The ice had turned to snow and the raging winds showed no sign of slowing; causing the snow to become one gigantic blizzard.

Jeff Tracy was really starting to worry. He had never seen a storm like this. It seemed to have just reared up out of nowhere and descended on them faster than they had anticipated. He thought back to his conversation with Dianne the other day, when they had 'discussed' what they had planned to do when he got home. That thought made him realize that Dianne, along with his sons, knew nothing of this trip to New Hampshire. He knew they'd be upset at not being advised of his whereabouts, but he hadn't given thought to horrendous weather either. He briefly pondered calling them as International Rescue, but Elise would hear and then he'd have a lot of explaining to do. All he could hope for at this point was that Ms. Collins would get them back to New York safely and then he would call home.

While this was all going through Jeff's mind, Elise had plenty of thoughts of her own keeping her busy. Her military training had kicked in, and she was keeping a level head and professional stance while trying to figure a way out of the storm. But her cool demeanor was fading fast. Warning indicators on the instrumentation panel flashed constantly, and it seemed no matter what she did, it made no difference. The warning lights continued.

She was now almost flying by instruments only as outside was nothing but a sea of white. The wind speed was constant and the ice had stopped, but the snow was blinding.

Elise started to double-check her altitude and directional gauges. Something didn't feel right, so she adjusted her elevation by a few degrees. They were still heading south, she was sure of it, but glancing again at the computerized compass readings showed them heading northwest. What the... ? Elise was finding it hard to believe that such a sophisticated, intricate system would compute such an error.

"Mr. Tracy?"

"What is it Elise?"

"I'm not sure, but I think we may have a computer malfunction in the directional gauges, sir."

"Are you sure?" Jeff frowned. He knew this ship inside out; Brains and he had designed it together and the computers had the most up to date technology available. They weren't meant to malfunction. It just wasn't possible.

"Yes, sir, we're heading south, and the gauges are reading northwest. I haven't changed direction."

Elise still had to shout somewhat through the headset as the noise level from the winds still made normal speech impossible. Jeff looked out of the window, it seemed as if they were hovering and not flying and he knew a blizzard whiteout could cause havoc with a pilot's senses.

"Elise, I'm coming up there to help. I can check the computers while you continue to fly."

Jeff unfastened his seat belt and started forward just as the chopper started to lurch and shudder.

"NO! Mr. Tracy, stay where you are! The winds have picked up again. It's too dangerous for you to move around!"

Elise was practically screaming at him, she was not only worried about his safety, but hers and the chopper's also. Her arms ached from trying to steady the craft and fight the winds, which were becoming increasingly stronger again.

"Have you contacted Air Traffic Control recently?" yelled Jeff as he was making his way forward.

"Yes, but radio signals are not getting through! I've sent over a dozen on all available wave strengths and can't get a fix!" Jeff heard the frustration in her voice and knew without radio contact, their situation could be disastrous.

"I've never seen a storm like this before Mr. Tracy; I'm doing the best... Ohmigod!"

Her sentence was cut short as the chopper was suddenly lifted and thrown completely sideways. A pilot's worst nightmare had just come true for Elise. Jeff knew immediately what had happened ... wind shear. The force of the winds against the air current had shifted and caused a crosswind, which suddenly changed direction, throwing off course whatever was in its path. Wind shear had been known to overturn a commercial passenger airliner in the last century, causing catastrophic results.

I've got to get to the controls! was the last conscious thought Jeff Tracy had as he tried in vain to reach the co-pilot's seat. The chopper fell like a dead bird and slammed into the side of a mountain with a sickening thud. There was no explosion, no fire. The chemical compounds that made up the exterior fuselage and engine components were specifically designed not to explode into flames upon impact. But that didn't prevent the craft from crumpling up. The distorted wreckage lay silent in the snow as the unforgiving storm raged on showing no mercy to its victims.

Post by FrankieCTB2 on 01/07/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Mon, 23 Jul 2012 23:40:21 GMT
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The dull throbbing pain that had seemed so distant was now annoying her to the point of waking

her up.

Why am I hurting like this? And where are my covers? It's so cold in here.

Elise's eyes slowly opened to a fading light. Unsure of her surroundings, she became confused. Trying to focus was one thing, but trying to do it while your face was throbbing was another. She started to reach for covers that weren't there, and caused pain to shoot through her side. Cursing under her breath she was now able to establish that her room was in fact the interior of a helicopter. She looked around, not seeing much as the fading light was beginning to cloud everything in darkness. Slowly moving her hands, she realised how cold she was; her fingers felt numb and now that she was awake, she had started to shiver. She had slumped against the side of the fuselage upon impact, still wearing her seat belt. She tried to pull herself up, wincing as more pain radiated through her right side.

The earlier events of that day started to trickle back into her brain. Suddenly, she remembered she had a passenger on board.

"Mr. Tracy? Are you there? Mr. Tracy?"

Struggling to pull up, she managed to undo her seat belt and lean forward enough to get her legs under her. The rear of the cabin was silent. She slowly started to make her way back towards where Jeff was supposed to have been sitting. Every breath she took was becoming increasingly difficult. The descending, cold night air was burning in her lungs and intensified the pain she felt. Realising she might have broken ribs, or worse, Elise stopped to rest for a few seconds. She needed to get to Jeff, make sure he was all right and then needed to call for help. It was then she thought about the emergency kit. Stowed in a cupboard between the pilot's seat and the first of the passenger seats, the kit had medical supplies, thermal blankets, and a flashlight.

Elise crawled slowly over the wrecked interior of the chopper until she located the cupboard. Feeling around in the dark was no fun but she managed to pull the kit free, along with the blankets. Pulling it open, she found the flashlight and said an immediate prayer of thanks because it illuminated the entire cabin. Looking around she saw an entire seat section and part of an outside door wedged into the far side of the fuselage. Underneath that was the body of Jeff Tracy.

Oh God... he can't be... no... He can't... Mumbling to herself between painful breaths, Elise scrambled as best she could over to where her boss lay unmoving.

Fumbling with numb fingers, she reached under the seat to grab his hand, feeling for a pulse. Her hand hit his watch as she moved her fingers around and finally she located one, weak but steady. She knew she wouldn't be able to move the door, and her survival training told her she needed to leave the patient be and stabilize him as best as possible.

Sounds great in theory. she thought to herself, but I've never actually had to practice it until now.

Gently calling his name and getting no response, she leaned over and saw how grave he looked.

"Oh damn, he's really in a bad way."

Holding the flashlight upon his face, Elise saw how cold and stone grey in color he was. Dried blood had formed on the right side of his temple and down his face. His breathing, or what she could make of it, was shallow. His lips were blue. Frantically grabbing for the thermal blankets she hastily shoved them under the door and working without looking, she wrapped him with them, making them as snug as possible. They were designed to immediately start giving off heat when the material came into contact with a live body. It wasn't much, but hopefully it would help him. Elise then found the jacket that he'd taken off and folded it around his head. She didn't want to move anything in case of a spinal injury, but thought it might help him.

"Mr. Tracy? Can you hear me? Wake up!" It's so damn cold in here! Her shivering continued and her hands were now feeling the effects of the cold. Radio...I've got to call for help!

All she could now think about was heading back over the wreckage towards the control panel. Her lungs burning, her side aching, she all but passed out before she made it back to her seat. Struggling for each breath, she lifted the radio microphone and spoke,

"Mayday! Mayday! This is Tracy Chopper One, we're down, need help, over?"

Static was her reply. "Mayday! Tracy Chopper One down, need immediate help, over?"

More static. Closing her eyes, Elise prayed that someone out there knew they had gone down. Trying again, she spoke into the radio,

"Mayday! Mayday! We are critical! Need help!"

It was no use, no strength of signal could be transmitted and deep down, Elise knew it. It didn't stop her from one more try though.

"Mayday! Please someone help us!"

The last was more of a plea than a standard call for rescue. Dropping the radio she looked over at Jeff. He hadn't moved.

"Please don't die, Mr. Tracy, please don't die." Elise leaned back and breathed painfully slow breaths and closed her eyes. She just needed a few minutes rest.

xxxx

Alan Tracy was bored. His feet planted on the table and the rest of him leaning back in a chair, he was killing time by flipping through one of the numerous car-racing magazines he'd brought up to Thunderbird 5 with him. He could hear the monitors in the background humming along and picking up transmissions. Nothing of importance had come across in quite a while. He had just reached the pages of luscious models draping their forms all over various sports cars, when he heard the automatic locator go off. Jumping up, magazine momentarily forgotten, Alan noticed that it was an emergency locator signal.

"That's odd, a distress call from...Dad? What's up with that?" He continued to monitor it for a few moments, noticing that the signal was stable and not moving in any direction. No other signals

were transmitting.

"I'd better call Scott."

Scott and Dianne were in the lounge once more, trying not to look anxious about Jeff missing his call home, but each knowing the other was worried. Alan's portrait started flashing, causing Dianne, who'd been standing by the window, to whirl round. Scott's eyes immediately flew to the portrait.

"Thunderbird 5 calling Base."

"Go ahead Alan! What have you got?"

"I'm not sure, Scott. The automatic locator picked up an emergency distress signal." Scott and Dianne exchanged worried glances.

"Go on, Alan," encouraged Scott.

"Well, I'm not sure, but it seems it's Dad's signal. Isn't he on his way home yet?"

"No, not yet."

Alan knew something was wrong by the look on his brother's face. "Scott, have you heard from Dad? Did he call yet?"

Alan was starting to worry now, and it was Dianne who answered his question.

"No, Alan, we haven't heard from your father."

All three of them then looked at each other in horrified silence as the inevitable thoughts crossed their minds.

Post by FrankieCTB2 on 01/07/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out

Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Mon, 23 Jul 2012 23:46:24 GMT

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Scott made a command decision. "Alan, try to patch me through to Dad's telecomm. Even if he's in the hands of someone like the Hood, he can pass the beeping off as an alarm."

"FAB, Scott," Alan replied. Scott pushed a button and a computer screen rose up from inside the desk. "Transfer his coordinates here, too, will you? I want to see where we're going if we have to scramble."

A map appeared on the screen and quickly zeroed in on the coordinates where the telecomm was broadcasting.

"New Hampshire?" Dianne queried, looking over Scott's shoulder. "What 'n hell is he doin' there?"

"I don't know, but I'm gonna find out," Scott said grimly.

The beeping grew louder, shaking Elise from her few minutes rest. "The radio! Someone's found us! Thank God!" She grabbed the microphone and practically started to yell into it.

"Can you hear me? This is Tracy One, please respond, over?"

Nothing. The same static as before, yet the beeping noise continued.

Elise looked around, confused. Obviously it wasn't the radio, so what was making that noise? She tried to home in on the sound and it seemed to be coming from where Jeff lay. Making her way over to him, she carefully and gently looked around him. He still hadn't woken and was still ashen. Sitting still, she could hear the beeping coming from almost beneath her. She lowered her head towards where his arm lay, where she had earlier felt for a pulse. Placing her hand on his arm, she felt the watch vibrate.

"What the heck?"

She had no idea what was happening, except that the alarm had decided to go off. Raising Jeff's arm a little, her intention was to switch it off. She pressed one of the buttons on the side.

"There he is!" Alan cried as the connection was made. Scott jumped on the speaker.

The vid picture confused Scott and Dianne both; it was dark. Scott called into the microphone. "Scott Tracy to Jeff Tracy! Do you read me? Come in, Jeff Tracy!"

There was no response. Stepmother and stepson looked at each other.

"Tracy Island to Jeff Tracy! Come in, Dad!"

Elise was struck dumb; she knew that voice! It was Scott. The watch was some kind of communication device, and Scott was trying to contact them!

"He found us! You're gonna be all right. Mr. Tracy. Scott found us!" Elise struggled with the small device. Frozen fingers were not helping.

"Scott? S-Scott? Can y-you hear me?" She was shivering again, trying to find the right button to open communications from herself to Scott.

Scott and Dianne were both getting concerned. Dianne wrapped her arms around herself and began to walk towards the windows.

I'm going to risk it. If this doesn't get his attention, nothing will. "International Rescue headquarters to Jeff Tracy. Come in, Jeff Tracy!"

Dianne turned back as she heard Scott's latest attempt. "You'll be 'n trouble for that one, Scott. Hope he isn't 'n trouble his own self."

Elise stopped dead in her tracks, her fingers still on the watch. International Rescue? She swore that's what she just heard Scott say. What the heck have they got to do with this? Pushing the thought aside for the moment, Elise tried again to open up communications.

"Scott! P-please answer me, Scott."

"Ah heard somethin'!" Dianne looked at Scott. "Try it again, Scott!"

"International Rescue Base calling Jeff Tracy! Come in Jeff Tracy!" Scott waited. Then he heard it too. A voice, not his father's, but a voice pleading for help.

"Scott! It's Elise, we're down and we're critical."

Dianne's face drained of color, but she hit the emergency signal that rang throughout the house and the apartments. Gordon, who was showing Brandon around Thunderbird Four, poked him and indicated for him to follow. Brains gathered up Callie and Kat from where they were in the lab and brought them with him. Tin-Tin, who was sunning out on by the pool with Nikki, grabbed the nurse by the hand and all but dragged her up the stairs to the Villa.

Cherry heard the alarm from the Cliff House patio where she was playing with Asterix. She picked up the kitty and returned him to Christopher.

"You need to come, Mr. Jordan," she said. "That's the emergency signal. There's going to be a rescue." Christopher frowned, but followed the girl.

In the kitchen, Dominic was discussing his vegetarian needs with Kyrano when the signal went off. He looked at the Malaysian with curiosity.

"Mr. Kelly, that is the emergency signal. You must go to the lounge right away. A rescue is being called in."

Dominic glanced over at Joshua, who was busy banging on a pot with a spoon under Emily Tracy's watchful eye.

"Go. We'll take good care of him," she told him encouragingly. Dominic nodded and headed upstairs.

Within minutes, the entire contingent, new and old, stood before the desk.

"Okay, Elise. What is your situation?" Scott asked crisply.

"Desperate, Scott. Went down a few hours ago, hit a really bad ice and snow storm. Couldn't...couldn't make it through." Elise was gasping for breath again, as the pain renewed itself in her ribcage. "Wind shear, Scott, took us down. We must have slammed into the mountain. Your Dad, Scott... he's not good... gotta help him Scott, you've gotta... help... him. It's so... so c-cold

Scott, soo cold."

"Okay, Elise. I want you to keep talking to me or to whoever is on the other end of this circuit. Do you understand?"

While Scott talked to Elise, Dianne sent Virgil on his way down to Thunderbird Two. "Make sure you take pod seven. This is yoah fathah an' mah husband an' Ah want him on th' surgical bed in mah Thunderbird!"

"Yes, ma'am!" Virgil said, surprised.

Dianne looked around at the group. "Dominic, Ah think Ah could use your help here. An' we'll probably need some muscle, too. Gordon? Brandon?"

"John, you come over here and keep Elise talking. You've got the most soothing voice," Scott said. "Elise, I'm handing you over to John. Talk to him. I'm on my way."

"Okay." Elise replied in a now tired, small voice.

"Elise, it's John, I want you to promise me you'll stay with me, keep talking to me, you got that?"

"Yes... keep talking... promise I won't let go of the watch...I won't let go."

"Good girl, stay with me. Elise, is my father awake?"

Elise glanced over to Jeff once again "No, he's not regained consciousness since we crashed."

John winced, but his voice never betrayed him. "Tell me what you did for him Elise, every detail, okay?"

Elise told him everything she had done, and John kept her talking as long as he could without overtaxing her. He could tell she was weary and the cold was affecting her now.

"Elise, help is on its way, do you understand me? We're coming to get you both."

"We? Who's coming?" Elise remembered Scott's reference to International Rescue. "Is International Rescue coming? What about Scott?"

John thought carefully before he spoke. "Elise, International Rescue and Scott are on their way. They'll get to you soon, hang on, honey, just hang on."

Dianne had ducked out for a few moments and when she came back, she was dressed differently. She wore a pair of light blue trousers, a dark blue bomber-style jacket, with a dark, blood-red mock turtleneck shirt peeking up from beneath the jacket collar. Dark red piping decorated the edges of the jacket and a red stripe traveled down on the outside of her trouser leg and topped her light blue boots. She carried a large duffel bag.

"Mom?" Gordon asked, a question in his eyes.

"New uniform design," she said tersely. "Dom, go with Gordon and Brandon. Ah'm travelin' with Scott."

Scott looked at her, then nodded and headed for Thunderbird One, Dianne on his heels.

Post by FrankieCTB2 and Tikatu on 01/07/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Mon, 23 Jul 2012 23:50:04 GMT
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John continued talking to Elise in a calming reassuring voice. He asked her about how she knew Scott, what her favorite movie was and just about anything else to keep her awake and focused. Elise knew what he was trying to do and fought sleep with everything she had left in her but it was becoming extremely difficult to stay on track. The cold had made her sleepy and all she really wanted to do was close her eyes.

"John, how much longer?" she pleaded.

John looked at the face on the vid screen; she was turning blue, and the right side of her face was swollen and looked bruised.

"Hold, on Elise, let me check with Scott."

Switching communication lines, John called Scott. "Base to Thunderbird One, come in, Scott."

"Base from Thunderbird One, go ahead John."

"What's your current ETA to the Danger Zone?"

"Will be approaching Danger Zone in approximately 4 minutes. Any change with Dad, John?"

"No, Scott, no change."

Scott heard the worry and pain in John's voice. "John, we'll find him, he'll make it! I know he will. How's Elise holding up?"

"I know you will, Scott, and Elise is holding on...barely. She's still conscious but I'm not sure for how much longer."

"Tell her we're almost there. I'll check in with Virgil."

"FAB Scott."

John switched back to Elise. "4 minutes Elise and the rescue team will be there." He watched her breath a sigh of relief.

"Thunderbird Two from Thunderbird One."

"Thunderbird Two, go ahead Scott."

"Virgil, I'm 3 minutes from Danger Zone, No change on condition of victims; how far behind are you?"

Virgil knew in his heart that his brother was trying to hold it together for the sake of the entire team. But this was their father, not a nameless, helpless victim, and Virgil knew how terrified Scott was, because he was feeling the same way.

"I'm about an hour and 15 mins behind you Scott, but don't worry, we'll be there soon. Let Mom know that Thunderbird 7 is ready to go."

"Will do. Thunderbird One out."

As Scott ended the transmission, he glanced over at his stepmother. Dianne was quiet, and she was calm, but inside she was being torn in 10 different directions. She was a doctor, she was about to get two patients... rescue victims... just like she'd handled many times before, but this was her husband, her lover, her best friend... her life. It was now up to her to save him.

How the hell did this happened? What the hell was he thinking flying off like that?

She felt Scott's eyes on her and looked at him. Neither said a word. Words weren't necessary.

Scott returned his focus to the job at hand, and switching back on communications with Base, Thunderbird Two, and Thunderbird Five, he radioed in.

"Thunderbird One approaching Danger Zone. Using landing lights to locate chopper."

"FAB," came the reply in unison.

Within seconds, Scott had located the chopper, the lights from beneath Thunderbird One illuminating the wreckage and surrounding snow.

"John? I think hear something... jets... VTOL jets!"

Elise had turned her face skyward and was rewarded with brilliant lights glaring back at her.

"It's Thunderbird One, Elise. It's Scott," John replied.

He wasn't sure if Elise had made the connection yet about Scott, but he wasn't going to worry about it now.

"Elise, stay with me 'til a rescuer reaches you, okay?" She acknowledged his request. She again looked over at Mr. Tracy. Jeff remained motionless.

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Mon, 23 Jul 2012 23:52:59 GMT
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Scott quickly surveyed the area below him and around crash site. There was no place for him to put down his ship. Frustrated, he turned to Dianne.

"I'm not gonna be able to land, I'll have to get as close as I can and drop you down. I'll stay in hover mode and keep the lights on. Once Virgil gets here, you'll have the equipment you'll need." Dianne could see the frustration written all over her stepson's face.

"Ah know you want to be down there Scott, but Ah'm gonna make sure your father comes out of this alive!"

All Scott could do was nod. He was afraid the sudden lump in his throat when Dianne mentioned his father would cause him to break. He was the Field Commander, and as such, breaking down was unacceptable. Scott fired the retros and his Thunderbird started to descend.

Dianne gathered up her things, putting a blood red ball cap on her head. She nodded to Scott.

"When Ah'm safely down, drop the duffel to me. That way, th' instruments won't break."

The ground came up, closer and closer beneath the open hatch. She sat on the edge, feeling the cold air and the winds from the VTOL jets buffet her lower legs and ankles. She tried to keep her focus on the ground beneath her and not on the dark blob of silent wreckage that lay off to the left.

Finally Scott looked at her and said apologetically. "I'm three meters up. It's as close as I can get." Dianne nodded, the snow and darkness were messing with her depth perception but she had to go; it was now or never. She grabbed hold of the hatch's edge, swung herself out, and dropped into the snow.

Her body made a muffled crunch as the snow absorbed the impact of her landing. Shaking off some flakes, Dianne stood and looked to the left again. Then she looked up and caught her medikit duffel. Scott had the lights tracked onto the wreckage and she made her way towards it. Her heart beating faster with every step, she approached the main fuselage.

"Elise? Elise, where are you?" A small noise in the darkness indicated where Dianne should proceed.

"O-over h-here...we're o-over here!"

Dianne pulled out the flashlight she had in her duffel bag and shone it in the direction of Elise's voice. Instantly Elise could be seen and Dianne started to climb towards her.

"Where's Jeff?" Elise indicated where her boss lay. Dianne gave Elise a quick once over, checking

her external injuries.

"Ah'll be with you as soon as Ah can Elise." Dianne's voice was soothing and Elise merely nodded. She was still too cold to do much else. Dianne moved over to Jeff. Bracing herself for the worst, she looked down at her husband.

She slid the flashlight up her jacket sleeve and closed her eyes briefly, swallowing heavily. In her hands-free headset she heard Scott asking in a low voice. "How is he, Mom?" No pretense of code names here. Just the raw emotion of family.

"Ah'm about to find out, son." She dug around in her duffel bag, pulling out her medscanner. She got close, her fingers feeling for the carotid artery, feeling for that all-important pulse. She found it and breathed a small sigh of relief. "He's got a slow, erratic pulse."

Now she passed the scanner over him and interpreted the back lighted readings. A deep breath this time, let out slowly. "He's hypothermic with a core temperature of 90 degrees. Which is a good thing because he's got some pretty serious internal injuries, broken ribs, at least one fractured vertebrae, which, thank God, isn't impinging on his spinal cord. His left tibia is broken and his left foot has a lot of little fractures as well. Man, this is a laundry list of trauma! A concussion and a broken left scapula. Unfortunately, there's not a lot I can do for him now. Not until I get this debris off of him. I'll just have to monitor his condition and...pray." She put up her scanner and sighed deeply. "In other words, Scott, tell Virgil to push that green beetle o' his to the max!"

Elise sat quietly hearing every word being spoken across from her.

"He didn't have his seatbelt on, I tried to make him sit down and put it on."

Dianne turned towards Elise and softly talked to her.

"Elise, this isn't your fault, Mah husband can get real stubborn at times, and Ah have a feeling this was one of them."

Husband? Elise digested this piece of information and it confused her even more. "Your h-his wife?" she asked incredulously.

Dianne noticed the shiver in Elise's voice and turned to her.

"Yes, Ah'm Dianne Tracy, and you're going to be needing this." Dianne handed a thermo blanket from her duffel bag to the other woman and helped secure it around her. Elise looked up and gave Dianne a small smile of gratitude. With a reassuring squeeze of Elise's hand, Dianne once again turned her focus to Jeff.

"Thunderbird Two from Thunderbird One! Virgil, where the hell are you?"

Scott's level of patience had long been exhausted and his brother should have been here by now.

"Thunderbird Two to Thunderbird One, Scott, I'm 5 minutes from the DZ, I'm pushing as hard as I

can!" Virgil tried not to sound annoyed with his brother; they were all on edge and short fused and so he let his brother's words slide.

"Okay, just get here ASAP. Mom is down there already. I can't land, and she needs back-up now!"

"FAB" came the curt reply.

Both women heard the approach of more engines and Dianne, closing her eyes, thanked God and Virgil all at once.

"It's the rescue equipment, Elise. We'll have you and Jeff out of here soon."

"Mom, I can't land. Virgil can't land. What do you need down there?" Scott asked succinctly.

"Lights. Winches to get the debris off of your father. Two antigravity stretchers. Compression bandages. The hypothermia kit with the warmed air." Dianne wracked her brains to think of anything to add. "Send all three; Gordon, Brandon, and Dom down with the rescue capsule."

She knelt by her husband's side and gently touched his cheek. Elise could hear the tears in her voice as she told him, "Don't you die on me, Jeff Tracy. Don't you dare die on me!"

Virgil heard his step mom's words and without hesitation called over his shoulder to the three team members with him "You heard the lady, now GO!"

"FAB!" Gordon was already out of his seat and giving directions to Brandon and Dom. Both listened intently to every last word and then along with Gordon they disappeared from the cockpit and were descending with the rescue capsule.

"Scott, they're on the way down! Brandon and Gordon will work the winches while Dom gets the anti-grav stretchers and medical equipment to Mom"

"FAB Virgil... and good work." Scott added the last part in a softer voice than he had been using and Virgil knew it was his brother's way of apologizing.

"Sure, Scott, no problem. Let's just hope we can get them out in time."

Post by FrankieCTB2 and Tikatu on 01/07/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Mon, 23 Jul 2012 23:53:59 GMT
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Christopher decided to sit down while he was listening to the frantic talk over communicators.

He stroked Asterix gently, as he listened to the well-oiled machine in action.

The tension was palpable. Looking around, he saw worry etched onto the faces of everyone in the room.

"Mr Tracy is a marvellous gentleman," he whispered to a tired Asterix. "I'm sure they'll get him out safely."

The cat licked his hand, batting it with a small paw, before closing his eyes.

"I wish I could be as oblivious." Christopher smiled as he turned back to the emergency at hand.

Post by TheWrongTrousers on 01/07/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Tue, 24 Jul 2012 00:05:00 GMT
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Tracy Island, 26th February 2068

Kat had finally managed to put her things away, and the apartment was looking more like home. She had put up the curtains at the French windows, and hung her pictures on the walls in the sitting room.

Not sure of what was expected of her, she decided to ring Lady Penelope.

Dialing Lady Penelope's number, she saw the all-too-familiar face of Parker.

"Hi, Parker, is Lady Penelope at home?"

"Why, Miss Kat, 'ow nice to 'ear from you. I was just talking to 'er Ladyship yesterday, and wondering 'ow you were getting on."

Lady Penelope's attractive face came into view.

"Kat, my dear, how lovely to hear from you. Settling in well, I hope?"

Kat grinned, "Yes, actually. I have been brought au courant with the real goings-on here. I have to admit that it all came as quite a shock. In fact, John showed me around and I am afraid I gave him quite a hard time. But of course you knew all along, didn't you?"

Lady Penelope looked at Kat. "Yes, I must admit I am aware of Tracy Island's secrets, and am sorry I could not say anything. I would have loved to have taken you into my confidence, but my hands were really tied."

"I can understand that now. What really hurt more than anything was that I knew the Tracy family, and they knew of me; we met at your New Year's Eve Party. Surely knowing all that, Mr Tracy could have told me at my interview. Still, as John told me, even Dr. Tracy wasn't let in on the secret at first." She sighed, then straightened and smiled. "Well, that is all water under the bridge

now. I am well and truly here, and here to stay."

"So, what are your first impressions?" Lady Penelope asked.

"Gosh, I really don't know where to begin."

"John showed me around Thunderbird 2's hangar, and while we were there, Thunderbird 2 came back from a rescue. Gosh, that was awesome." She hugged herself with delight. "I shall primarily be helping with the boats and the seaplane. That boat pen is something quite unbelievable. Then we went to see the planes and jet. I asked question after question. John was very patient. I didn't really have time to thank him properly. I must do so."

Suddenly the door chimed. "Looks like someone is visiting me. I shall have to go. I will call you again."

"Yes, do, I want to know everything that you are doing," replied Lady Penelope.

Kat went to the door, standing there was Callie.

"I'm just going to the lab to see Brains, wondered if you would like to join me?"

"Yes, would love to." And shutting the door behind her, she followed Callie on to the monorail and headed for Brains' lab.

They hadn't been there very long, when a long siren noise was heard. Both girls jumped at the noise. "What is that?" Callie asked.

"It's the emergency signal," Brains explained. "It means that a rescue is being planned. We must go to the main house at once."

They arrived, rather breathless, to find Scott, Virgil and Dianne preparing to leave.

"What's happened?" Brains asked.

"It's Dad," Gordon explained. "Seems he has crashed while flying through an ice storm in New Hampshire."

"What was he doing there?"

"That's exactly what we would all like to know," John answered.

Kat watched in awe at how Scott, Dianne and Virgil left the room followed by Gordon, Brandon and Dom, the latter two looking slightly nervous.

John was talking to someone via the radio. He looked up and smiled at Kat.

"I bet you didn't think you would be getting first hand experience of a rescue quite so soon," Brains said. Kat nodded, but she noticed the worry in his voice.

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Tue, 24 Jul 2012 00:14:08 GMT
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Brandon sat between Dominic and Gordon, nervously tapping his foot against the metal floor. He was on his first rescue mission; one he hadn't expected so soon. Dominic looked over at him, noticing the anxiety he projected.

Dominic met Brandon's gaze and shared the nervous look. Although he had been on rescues with LifeFlight, they had been nothing like this, and they had never been to save his boss.

Gordon knew that both men were nervous: hell, so was he! This was his father they were going out to save! He took a deep breath. "Guys, I know you're nervous. We all are. Just focus on the task at hand and we'll all be fine. We'll all do fine."

The rescue capsule descended rapidly, and soon enough the three men were on the ground and ready for action. Dominic gathered up the anti-grav stretchers and medical equipment and set off towards the wreckage

While Dominic went to see to the victims, Gordon and Brandon set up the lights and other necessary equipment. Gordon closed his eyes momentarily when he saw his father's grey and bruised face. Then he took a deep breath and the veteran rescuer took over.

"We'd better hurry!" Brandon shouted above the wind. "This storm isn't getting any better!" And neither are the victims.

"Doctor Tracy." Dominic joined Dianne inside the wreckage. She was beginning to treat Elise's injuries. "What do you need here first? I have the stretchers and the equipment."

"We could use a light over heah!" Dianne called. She turned to Dom. "She's goin' into hypothermia, too. We need to set up the warmed air and an IV warmer. We also need a compression bandage to keep her ribs from movin'. Last thin' she needs is a punctured lung." Dianne turned to her patient. "Elise, Ah'm gonna have to open your coat and pull up your shirt, hon. Ah need to bandage your ribs so they don't move. Do you understand?"

"Okay," Elise said faintly.

"It's gonna be cold for a minute. But only a minute," Dianne kept explaining as she removed the thermo-blanket, opened Elise's jacket and pulled up on her Tracy Industries polo shirt.

Elise cried out as Dianne lifted the shirt. But, as promised, it was soon over and she was warm again. Dominic adjusted the thermal blanket around her again and set out one of the anti-grav stretchers ready to take her. He looked to Dianne

"Is she ready to go, then?"

"Lemme give her a low dose of analgesic, and then we can take her up and set up the warming equipment. It's too hard to do down here. Once she's settled, then we'll come back down and get... Jeff." Dianne pulled out a hypospray and injected Elise with the pain reliever. Then she and Dom gently moved the pilot to the stretcher.

Together, they brought Elise, strapped to the stretcher, over to the rescue capsule where Gordon was waiting. He expertly secured the stretcher safely inside, showing Brandon how it was done on the way.

Dianne called to Dom. "Send down a backboard with whoever goes up with you!" Dominic gave Dianne a thumbs-up, and nodded to Brandon and Gordon to start the winch. Gordon watched the rescue capsule start on its way up and then trotted back into the wreckage of the helijet.

"How is she?" Brandon asked Dom as the capsule made its slow ascent to Thunderbird Two.

"She's stable." Dom said, looking over the patient. "Once we get her safely on a biobed, she'll be all right."

The winds and snow set the rescue capsule to swaying slightly but the weight of the passengers kept it from going too far. Suddenly, an ear-splitting screech could be heard from above and the rescue capsule came to an abrupt halt.

Post by MagicMaster8, Tikatu and ArtisticRainey on 01/07/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Tue, 24 Jul 2012 00:19:52 GMT
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"What was that?" Dominic asked sharply, his eyes wide and his gaze instinctively checking over Elise.

What's going on?" Brandon shouted. "The capsule's stopped moving." Brandon radioed Virgil, notifying him of the problem.

In Thunderbird Two's cockpit, Virgil's hands flew over the monitors, and he swore as he heard from Brandon about the fouled winch. "Sorry, guys but I can't do anything about it! I don't dare put Two on autopilot; the winds are just too fierce!"

Dominic glanced at Brandon and shook his head. "Oh, wonderful," he said. "I'm not worried about Elise right now, but what about Doctor Tracy? We'll need to get Mr. Tracy up pronto."

"I got an idea, Dom. If I can reach Thunderbird Two, I can unfoul the winch line."

"How are you goin' ta get up there? Those winds are mighty fierce." However, the determined expression on Brandon's face strengthened him. "Right then, if I give you a boost up, you'll be

able t' climb out."

"That's the idea," Brandon replied, standing under the hatch. "I'll climb the cable." Dom made a stirrup out of his hands. Letting out a grunt, and with some effort, he hoisted his teammate up through the hatch.

Oh my God, he's heavy! Dominic groaned internally as he helped Brandon up. The capsule began to jerk and groan even more as Brandon exited, and the wind howled louder than before, and the cold invaded the small space.

Brandon gripped the cable and started climbing the cable with a slow hand-over-hand movement. I've got to make it, I WILL make it. There was a moment of panic as one hand slipped on the cold, ice-laden cable. Man, that was close, Brandon thought as the wind howled around him, turning his cheeks and nose a bright red. He persevered until the welcome sight of Thunderbird Two's open hatch came into sight.

With a little effort, Brandon pulled himself through the open hatch. He took no time to rest. Going over to the winch, Brandon started to examine it, trying to get it to work.

Down in the capsule, Dominic glanced upwards and hoped Brandon had made it. The bouncing about had ceased, and he prayed it was because the other man was safely aboard.

Brandon looked at the cable and almost immediately found the problem. "Dom," Brandon said into his radio, "how are things going down there?"

Dominic patted Elise's shoulder through the thermal blanket lightly. "It's all right, but we need to get our patient up ASAP."

"I know, Dom. I'll get you up as soon as I can. The cable got twisted. I'm going to have to lower the capsule then raise it again to get the kinks out."

"Okay. We're ready," Dom said. He braced himself for the movement.

The capsule moved slowly downward, stopping halfway between its previous position and the ground. There it paused while Brandon began to rethread the cable. Then it moved up again as quickly and smoothly as conditions would allow. At last, Dom and Elise were safe aboard Thunderbird Two. Brandon reached over and began to unfasten the antigravity stretcher from the capsule.

Yes! Brandon shouted in silent triumph as he helped Dom carry Elise to the sickbed. Dominic flipped down the biobed, pleased to see that it initialized itself. He indicated that Brandon should help transfer the patient to it. Together, they gently moved a sleepy Elise over, and then Dom folded up the stretcher and put it away. He pulled out a folded up backboard. "Dr. Tracy said she needed this. Can ya take it down to her?"

Brandon nodded, heading back to the capsule, backboard in hand. He stopped, activating his hands-free communicator. "Virgil, first victim's out and being treated in Thunderbird Seven."

"Thanks, Brandon. Who came up?" Virgil asked, hoping against hope that it was his father and that Jeff was now out of danger.

Brandon knew why Virgil was asking and hated to dash his hopes. "Elise came up first. We're still working to get Mr. Tracy out."

Down in the fuselage of the helijet, Gordon was preparing the winches while Dianne pulled out her equipment, muttering under her breath as she did so.

"Cervical collar, inflatable splints, compression bandages, EKG defibrillator, warmed O2, thermo-blankets.... oh, God. Please help me."

Tears threatened to well up as she saw her patient as her husband again and she tried hard not to break down.

Suddenly, she heard Scott's voice in her ear. "Mom, you can't break down now. If you do, we all do, and then what happens to Dad? You've got to stay strong, for him, for all of us. Now, take a deep breath. Brandon's on his way down. Stay with us, Mom. Don't give in. And don't give up."

Dianne bit her lower lip, took a deep breath, and swallowed. She wiped away a tear that had escaped, then took another deep breath.

"Thanks, Scott. Ah'll be okay. You'd better have Alan check on the status of the local hospitals. The way this storm is blowin' we may have to go a piece to get your father to a good one."

"FAB, Doc. I'm on it," Scott said, happy to do what he could.

Soon enough, Brandon arrived on the scene with the anti-grav stretcher and the backboard, and unfolded each, readying them for the patient.

Dianne affixed the cervical collar around Jeff's neck, the one place she could reach without having to move the debris. Then she laid the backboard at her feet and readied the compression bandage. She looked at Gordon, and at Brandon, who were ready to begin moving the seats and the door from Jeff's prone, still form. She nodded, and Gordon powered up the winches.

Slowly and carefully, the debris was cleared away. Gordon and Brandon kept their eyes peeled for any debris that looked like it would collapse. Dianne kept watch over her husband throughout the agonizingly slow process.

As soon as there was room enough for her to fit under there, she removed the blankets as quickly as she could, and opened Jeff's shirt. With a practiced hand, she placed the leads for her EKG/defibrillator on the proper places near his heart. Then she flattened her hands as much as she could and pushed the compression bandage under him, pulling it out from the other side and wrapping it around his chest. She covered him back up, and then crawled under to address the broken bones. Cutting open his sleeve, she wrapped his forearm with an inflatable splint and blew it up to the proper pressure. She cut his pants leg off and did the same to that but she left on his boot, just wrapping the splint around it for more stability.

"Gordon, Ah need your help with th' backboard."

"No problem, Mom."

Gordon brought the backboard over, and, assisted by Brandon, they very gently transferred Jeff onto it, being careful not to aggravate his condition further.

"Okay, guys. Let's strap him down an' Ah'll set up the warmed O2. We'll do the IV when we get him into Thunderbird Seven. Gently goes it, though. He's in too precarious a position to take any bumps.

After setting up the warmed O2 mask, they transported him to Thunderbird Two. Dominic came to help settle Jeff on the surgical bed at the back of Thunderbird Seven, giving Dianne a hand with starting the IV of warmed fluids.

"How's Elise?" she asked, not looking up while she worked on Jeff.

"Stable and warming up," was Dominic's succinct reply.

"Please keep an eye on her. Ah'll ride back here with Jeff."

Dominic went over to the doctor's station, where the readings from Elise's biobed could be monitored. He heard Dianne begin discussions with Virgil and Scott about where to take their patient. They settled on New York, where the blizzard's power had yet to be felt. But as he looked back, all he could focus on was the heart-wrenchingly sad and worried look on Dianne's face and the way she gently stroked Jeff's hair back as she softly talked to him.

Post by MagicMaster8, Tikatu and ArtisticRainey on 01/07/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Tue, 24 Jul 2012 00:22:14 GMT
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The rest of the new IR recruits remained in the lounge, since Scott had not given the all clear yet. Callie paced around the room, nervous as she could possibly be. Why does it have to be him? she thought gravely. It always seems good people have to suffer while the worst vermin can get out scot-free. Mr. Tracy is one of the nicest people I've ever met, and now his life is in danger.

She looked around the room at the others in the room. Each of them was reacting differently. I can see Christopher's calm comes from his cat. But how does John stay so cool? Or Tin-Tin? They're much closer to this rescue than I am, and I can't sit still!

Tin-Tin saw how nervous Callie was. "Are you all right?"

"No, I'm not. I'm worried about Mr. Tracy. He's a nice man, period, and now... I just don't understand how you can stay so calm about this."

Tin-Tin sighed. "Part of it is experience, Callie. We've been on so many other rescues before. And, I'll admit, in this case part of it is numbness. I just can't believe that this has happened to Mr. Tracy. I don't know what to feel, so until I know one way or another about his condition, I don't feel at all."

Callie nodded. "Makes sense. It's just scary that the man who hired me a little over two weeks ago is the one in the greatest danger right now. If only I could do something to help him..." Tears started falling from her eyes.

Tin-Tin put a hand on Callie's shoulder and gave it a squeeze. "I know. We all wish there was something we could do. But we have to leave him, and Ms. Collins, in the hands of the rescue team that went out." She pointed to John, who had an arm around Tyler. "Even Tyler knows that."

"I guess I need to have faith. I know it's got to be especially tough on Dr. Tracy and the others...trying to keep cool in this nightmare."

"Yes, especially on Dianne. His life's in her hands, literally." The tone of the room changed as the eyes on Scott's portrait blinked.

"Go ahead, Scott," said John straightforwardly.

"Tell the others to stand down. We're getting Dad to New York now. It hasn't been affected by the blizzard."

"Scott...how is Dad?"

With one heavy breath, he answered, "Right now...not that good. We'll let you know more as soon as we can get information."

"Okay, Scott. Keep in touch as often as you can."

"F.A.B."

After Scott's portrait changed back, John looked at the others. "All right, everyone. There isn't much we can do for the time being...except pray."

Post by TracyFan4Ever and Tikatu on 02/07/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Tue, 24 Jul 2012 00:33:00 GMT
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Brandon and Gordon watched as Thunderbird Two took off--without them.

The new recruit turned to the veteran. "So, how're we getting home? Will we wait for Virgil to come back and get us and the equipment?"

"Nope." Gordon pointed upwards as Thunderbird One moved into position above them. He began to shut down the portable lights. "It'll be cramped, but we'll get to where we're going just as fast if not faster."

"And where are we going?" Brandon asked as he pulled down some of the winches, letting the seats back down to where Jeff had lain just moments before.

"I'm not sure. But the faster we deal with this equipment, the faster we get out of the cold."

Brandon nodded, and buckled down to work.

XXXX

Dianne contemplated her dark-haired Irish nurse from her position at Jeff's side. Then she spoke.

"Dom, Ah think you'll have to be the one going down with Jeff and Elise. Ah can't appear at the hospital both as AhR an' as Mrs. Jefferson Tracy. An' you bettah believe that Ah'm gonna be there as Mrs. Tracy as soon as Ah can get a cab!"

"But Dr. Tracy, you need to come down to the hospital, too. It will save time to bring the patients down one right after the other." Dom protested.

"If there was a way to camouflage my hair and face, yes, Ah would...." Dianne jumped as Brains' voice broke into the conversation.

"Dianne, you'll find a polarized visor in my workshop on Thunderbird Two. I've been working on putting some Heads Up Display technology in it as a way of communication, but it's not quite ready yet. The visor, however, won't obstruct your vision and, with your baseball cap, should shield half your face. That should be sufficient."

"You think so, Brains?" Dianne asked.

"Yes. That is, if you can get that drawl of yours under control for a few minutes," Brains warned.

"Ah... I mean, I can try," Dianne said, making an effort to bury her persistent drawl. "It only comes out when Ah... I am upset or angry."

"Save it for visiting as family, Mom," Scott added. "By the way, how do we want to handle this? All of us are going to want to be there."

"Yes, and how will we manage the media? Dad's hospitalization will be news!" Virgil chimed in.

"Well, as far as I am concerned, Virgil's going to drop me off on the helijet pad at the Tracy Building so I can change clothes at the penthouse and catch a cab!" Dianne exclaimed. "Since only one of you flyboys got left behind on this rescue, I suggest that you take the Thunderbirds home. We can work out a schedule of who comes out when once we know how long he's going to be hospitalized." She sighed. "As far as the media is concerned, we'll have to let the hospital and Tracy Industries handle it. And someone needs to call Penelope, so she can brief the agents."

"We can't let the media get to Elise, Mom," Scott commented. "We have to do something to protect her, too."

"I know, Scott, I know," Dianne replied in a frustrated tone. "One thing at a time. And the first thing is to get your father to the hospital! Virgil? ETA?"

"Six minutes."

"Excellent. Dom, let's get them both prepared for transport. I'll go get that visor and tuck as much hair under my ball cap as I can." She looked sadly down at Jeff, and gently kissed his still-cold forehead. "I've got to go, love. But I'll be with you as soon as I can be."

Ned Cook and his cameraman, Joe, were drinking coffee and listening to the emergency scanners. Ned suddenly spluttered, spitting out his mouthful of java when he heard:

"International Rescue Thunderbird Two requesting heliport access at Mount Sinai Hospital Trauma Center. We have two patients, one stable, one critical."

"Mount Sinai Trauma here, heliport access granted. We are on standby for your patients."

"Thunderbird Two?" Joe cried. "At Mount Sinai?"

"Yes! This is news! Let's go down there and see who they brought in! To get an exclusive interview with an IR rescue victim, that would make my year!" Ned shouted. "C'mon, Joe!"

They sped across town to the hospital, where they found that they weren't the only members of the media to be awaiting the arrival of whoever the International Rescue team brought in. Cameras were pointed skyward as a dark blob passed between the ground and the dark sullen clouds of the approaching blizzard. The already swirling snow served to obscure the IR vehicle even more from the cameras and lights below.

"Ned, come on. I know another way in," Joe said. Ned followed as the cameraman led him to a loading dock. A security guard stopped them, but then smiled as he recognized Joe.

"You here to try and get a gander at that Thunderbird, Joe?" he asked, still blocking their way.

"Well, no, Pete. My friend, Ned, and I don't try to film the Thunderbirds anymore. Kinda a sign of respect for them, for what they did for us," Joe answered. Pete nodded.

"So what are you and the great Ned Cook doing here, talking to your ol' brother-in-law?" Pete asked, making it known that he knew he was being asked for a favor.

"We want to find out who they brought in. Maybe get an interview with them. You know we'd be careful; we know what it's like to be rescued by IR," Ned stressed.

Pete thought it over for a moment, then handed them each a badge marked "Press."

"I'm not letting you go in secretly. You have to declare who you are. And the camera stays here with me, Joe. You can take a tape recorder if you have one. I think that's fair to you and to whoever they brought in, don't you?"

"Yeah, and thanks, Pete. I owe you one," Joe said with a grin.

"You owe me lots of ones. Some day I'm gonna collect."

Ned waved at Pete as he and Joe entered the building. They found their way to the Trauma Center, where they understood the patients were to be taken. Ned turned a corner, and suddenly stopped, pulling back and stopping Joe.

"Look! Who's that with the antigravity stretcher? Is that someone from IR? He's wearing their colors in scrubs, like a doctor."

"Yeah, he is, and the IR logo is on the scrubs. But I thought their doctor was a woman."

"Maybe they have more than one. And who's following him? The one with those odd sunglasses. She's wearing an IR logo on that jacket, but that's like no uniform I've ever seen."

"Ned, forget about her, look who's on the stretcher? Isn't that...?"

"Ohmigod, yes! It is! Man, what a story this will make! Billionaire recluse Jefferson Tracy rescued by IR! Oh, Joe. I've gotta get the details!"

"Then let me hang around a bit, let me hear what I can hear. They won't know me. You sit over in the waiting area and I'll snoop around."

Twenty minutes later, Joe was back.

"Oh, man, Ned, you are not going to believe this. Jeff Tracy went up in a helijet to New Hampshire, no one knows why, and his state-of-the-art craft crashed in the blizzard! He's in critical condition, hypothermic, and they're warming him up in preparation for surgery already. The family is being notified...."

Ned's eye was caught by a woman wearing an expensive fur coat that had just come up in the elevator, accompanied by a security guard. She briskly strode to the nurses' station and was greeted by a doctor, who guided her deeper into the maze of the Trauma Center's cubicles.

"I'd say that the family has been notified. That was Dr. Dianne Tracy who just came in here," Ned said with satisfaction. "Let's keep an eye on the lady and see if we can get a word or two with her. But until then, I'd better call this in to the newsroom. Jeff Tracy in a helijet crash! That's big news!"

Dianne sat in a small lounge, one used for VIPs, a coffee cup on the table next to her and her

head resting on her clasped hands.

Did we get to him in time? Did I do enough to save him? Oh, God! Please! Don't take him from me! I'll never forgive myself if he dies because of my error!

A shadow crossed the doorway. "Mom?"

Dianne looked up to see Gordon standing there. She stood and he came to her and embraced her.

"What are you doin' here, Gordon?"

"Well, we talked it over and the guys and I decided you shouldn't be by yourself. Since I was the one son who didn't have to fly a Thunderbird back to the Island, I was selected to stay. Scott came back and dropped me off at the penthouse like Virgil did you. At least he could land there and I didn't have to jump out. He's going to come back in Thunderbird One with Grandma."

"Ah hope she survives the journey! Ah might have guessed that Em would want to be heah as quickly as she could. But, oh, Ah'm glad you're heah, son." Dianne sat back down and Gordon sat next to her, taking her hand.

"So, how is he?"

"They've gotten his core temp up high enough to attempt surgery on th' internal injuries. He's been in there for, oh, about thirty minutes so far."

"Which means they've barely begun," Gordon said.

"No, not this time. This time it's all hurry, hurry, hurry since he's in such a delicate and critical condition. Doctors praised International Rescue for their work but since they couldn't say how long his core temp had been down, there are no guarantees. No guarantees that he comes out of this without brain damage. No guarantees that he comes out of this without losing some digits due to frostbite. No guarantees he comes out of this, period."

Dianne looked at her stepson with tears in her eyes. "Oh, Gordon! Ah don't want to lose mah husband!"

"And I don't want to lose my Dad, either, Mom. So let's think only that he's gonna recover. You and I both know how damned stubborn he is. He won't go quietly." Gordon pulled Dianne into another embrace, and then looked up. His eyes got wide and he swore.

"What's the matter, son?" Dianne asked, puzzled, wiping the tears from her eyes.

"It's Ned Cook, and he's coming this way! I've got to make myself scarce!" He glanced back at her before he went out the door. "Can you handle him?"

Dianne nodded. "Yes, Ah can. Come back soon. Bring bettah coffee."

Gordon nodded and walked out of the room, trying to look nonchalant and still move quickly away. He was out of sight before Ned Cook made it to the door and knocked on the frame, as the door was open.

"Dr. Tracy? Dr. Dianne Tracy?" Ned put on his most sincere tone, his most sympathetic smile. He looked at the lovely woman sitting there, her fur coat casually thrown over a chair, her designer clothes accentuating her figure, her long legs crossed at the knee, and her eyes, red from tears.

"Yes, Mistah Cook. Ah am Dianne Tracy. To what do I owe the dubious honor of yoah visit?"

Hoo boy. She knows who I am and she's not happy to see me. Not a good combination. "I was wondering if I could have a few words from you? About your husband's accident."

"Yes, you may."

Ned eagerly entered the room, but Dianne put up a hand.

"No need to come in, Mistah Cook. You can have mah words from the doorway because they are few."

Ned stopped, confused. "What do you mean, Dr. Tracy?"

Dianne smiled slightly. "Mah words on th' subject of mah husband's accident are these: mind yoah own business." She cocked her head at him. "D'you understand?"

Ned colored, but kept his temper. "Yes, Dr. Tracy. I believe I do. But if, by any stretch of the imagination, you decide you want to speak to the public about it, please call me first. My card." He stepped into the room to hand it to her.

Dianne took it, glanced at it, and put it aside. She returned her gaze to him as if willing him to go away.

"I'll leave you alone now, Dr. Tracy," he said as he turned to leave. Then he stopped and looked back. "Oh, by the way, do you have any idea why your husband was in New Hampshire?"

"Now, Mistah Cook. Would Ah tell you if Ah did?"

"No. I suppose not. Goodnight, Dr. Tracy. I hope your husband recovers."

She nodded her thanks, and he left, empty-handed.

Post by Tikatu on 02/07/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Tue, 24 Jul 2012 01:04:51 GMT
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Gordon had barely managed to get by Ned Cook without being seen. Right now Gordon didn't need the reporter in his face, especially the reporter whose life he'd saved. Sure, it was nice to be thanked when you saved a life, but Ned would want more than to just make pleasant conversation. He would want information and wouldn't stop until he got some. He would also make the connection between IR and the Tracy family, and that had to be avoided at all costs.

Gordon approached the nurses' station and asked after Elise. "I'm Mr. Tracy's son and she was brought in with him," he explained to the nurse after she'd questioned who he was. Pulling up information on her computer, she politely informed him that Elise was stable and resting. Gordon thanked her and proceeded back to where Dianne was waiting for news on Jeff. Quietly opening the VIP lounge door, he walked over to her.

"Mom? Any news?" A teary-eyed Dianne looked up at him and sadly smiled.

"No, not yet." She sighed wearily and then noticed Gordon had remembered to bring back some more coffee.

"Ah hope it tastes bettah than th' first lot Ah choked down!"

Gordon smiled fondly at her as he handed her the cup. "I think it will, it cost more!"

His attempt at a little humor raised a small smile of gratitude from his stepmom. He sat down next to her and told her he'd checked on Elise.

"Well, that's good news at least. She'll probably be here a day or two before they discharge her." Gordon merely nodded, and made him self more comfortable. It was going to be a long wait.

Elise stirred and opened her eyes. It feels so good to be warm again, she thought. She didn't feel any pain at the moment and knew it was because of the medication she'd been given. She lay in bed with the pillows behind her raised. An IV dripped next to her head on her left side and she could hear the monitors bleeping her vital signs.

Her thoughts wandered to Mr. Tracy; she had no idea if he'd made it or not. Her recollection of the crash and the aftermath was a little fuzzy, but she did remember International Rescue being there and that Mr. Tracy's wife had also been there. It just doesn't make sense! She rattled her brain for an answer but none came. It was at this moment her stomach decided to alert said brain to the fact it hadn't received any food in some time. Elise pressed the nurses' button on the little remote on the bed next to her leg. A few minutes later a smiling nurse appeared.

"How are feeling Ms. Collins? You've been sleeping for quite some time."

"I feel a whole better than I did earlier. I am hungry right now though."

"No problem, I'll have some food sent up for you." The nurse fussed about and checked the IV and monitors and adjusted the bedding. "How's Mr. Tracy doing?" The nurse looked at Elise with what Elise read as almost pity.

"Not good, I'm afraid. He's in surgery right now. We'll know more when the doctors come out of

the OR."

"Thank you." Elise closed her eyes and wished the nurse had told her something different.

"Is his family here yet?"

"Yes, his wife and one of his sons are in the VIP lounge. I think the rest of the family are on their way."

The nurse smiled and started to leave. "The food will be here shortly." All Elise could do was manage a half-hearted, "Thanks."

Laying her head back down, she once again tried to make sense out of so much confusion.

Ned Cook, on the other hand, was not confused. He was miffed about being given the brush off by Dr. Dianne Tracy, but that wasn't going to damper his determination.

"Joe, I've another idea, come with me." His long time partner and cameraman followed silently along the corridor towards the nurses' station. Ned started whispering.

"Joe, I'm going to hang out around the nurses' station until I hear something newsworthy. Why don't you go get something to eat?"

"Okay. You want me to get you sumthin'?"

"Yeah, thanks, a sandwich or just whatever."

Joe was about to ask another question, but Ned's attention was already elsewhere and so he left to go to the cafeteria. Ned nonchalantly strolled around the vicinity of the nurses' station, aching to pick up just the slightest piece of information. He didn't have to wait long.

"Will you please have a meal sent to Elise Collins' room?" The pretty young nurse who had just left Elise's room walked up and sat down behind a desk.

"Sure, no problem," her colleague replied, already making the call. "How is she doing?" another nurse asked.

"She's awake, and asking about Mr. Tracy. She seemed quite upset when I told her the news."

"She was brought in with him, wasn't she?" continued the other nurse.

"Yes, apparently she was the pilot of the helijet that Jeff Tracy was on." Picking up a file, the nurse returned to her duty.

Ned Cook had all he needed, and careful not to arouse anyone's curiosity, he walked down the corridor towards Elise's room. It wasn't difficult to find, the medical chart was still in the mail holder on the door. He looked through the glass and saw she was awake. Perfect! He knocked and entered before she could reply. At first, Elise thought it was the food arriving until she saw empty

hands. "Ms Collins?"

"Y-yes?" she replied cautiously.

"I'm Ned Cook, reporter for NTBS and host of the Ned Cook Show." He displayed his best smile hoping to win her over with it. It didn't.

"What do you want, Mr. Cook?" she asked bluntly.

"I was hoping maybe you would be able to give me some details of the events leading up to the crash of the chopper that Mr. Jeff Tracy was in. You are his pilot, aren't you?"

He sure doesn't beat about the bush "Mr. Cook, now's not a really good time. I'm still fuzzy on a lot of the details and I wo..."

"Oh, I understand! But my viewers are concerned and have a right to know if one of the worlds' richest men is going to live or die and..."

Before he could finish, a very stern voice behind him said, "ENOUGH!" Ned turned to see a very angry looking RN holding a plate of food.

"You do NOT have any business disturbing this patient and I suggest you leave NOW if you know what's good for you!"

Ned decided not to argue. It would lessen his chances of returning later.

"Of course. My apologies for disturbing you, Ms Collins." With that, Ned left the room.

"Thank you." Elise breathed again, relieved that annoying man had gone.

Ned made his way down to the cafeteria and found Joe munching on a sandwich.

"Damn it, Joe! I'm going to get some info on this crash and I'm not leaving this hospital until I do!"

Ned plopped down in the seat across from Joe, who merely held out his hand and offered, "Sandwich?"

Post by FrankieCTB2 on 02/07/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out

Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Tue, 24 Jul 2012 01:14:16 GMT

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Dominic and Brandon unbuckled themselves from Thunderbird Two's jump seats as Virgil gave the all clear. He kept a calm exterior, but both new recruits could tell he was more than a little worried. He has good reason, Dominic thought as they followed Virgil back to the lounge, I wish t' God that it was me in there assisting the surgeon. This is the sort of thing I've been dealing with

for years.

There was a flurry of movement as the three men entered the lounge. John sped over to Virgil and grabbed his arm, quizzing him for any new information, even though he seemed to know he would get none. Dominic stretched, wincing as a series of pops issued from his spine. Brandon clapped him on the shoulder, and Dom gave him a smile.

"Well done," Brandon said, "we did good."

"We make a good team." Dominic said. "If only the situation hadn't been quite so close to home, as they say."

Brandon nodded, and the two headed over to where the new recruits were clustered, their faces pinched with worry, but with curiosity, too. Brandon and Dominic were the first of them to go on a rescue. Nikki went straight to Dominic and started quizzing him on Jeff's condition, how he had been, what had been done for him. The two spoke in a strange medical shorthand that the others didn't quite get. Christopher, Kat and Callie questioned Brandon, both about Jeff and about the equipment they had been using.

"Daddy!"

Dominic whirled around as the high-pitched squeal went out. Cherry had been watching Joshua, who broke free and ran as quick as his small legs would carry him to his father. Dominic scooped him up and gave him the hug he obviously wanted. Cherry followed and heaved a sigh, shaking her head.

"He wasn't very happy that you were gone," she said. "But, it was a nice distraction, in a way."

Dominic patted the girl's shoulder and nodded his head.

"Yes, he's going through that 'terrible-tuos' stage, not that I like to call it that. Josh seems to know that he can't misbehave, but he does. It's natural. And Cherry, sweetie, your Dad will be okay."

"I hope you're right."

Post by ArtisticRainey on 02/07/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Tue, 24 Jul 2012 01:18:15 GMT
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Mount Sinai Hospital, New York, February 27th, 12:15 am.

"Is there anything I can get for either of you?"

The offer came from the nurse who earlier had seen to Elise. The two people sitting in the room looked her way and spoke together.

"No, thanks."

"Just let me know if you do, okay?"

"We will. You've been very kind," answered Gordon.

The nurse paused slightly before continuing. "I think you should know that a reporter has been sniffing around asking questions and trying to get information about Mr. Tracy. One of the other nurses found him asking Elise Collins about the crash."

Bidding farewell, the nurse left the room. Gordon was fuming!

"Damn him! Damn Ned Cook! He's knows better than this!"

He was now out of his seat and had started to pace, hands on his hips. "Just who the hell does he think he is?"

"Gordon, please calm down. You're not helping matters by yellin'. First thing that you need to do is call Scott and let him know. Lord knows the last thing your father needs is a media frenzy here in the hospital."

Hearing Dianne's rational words helped calm him down, but Gordon was not going to let this slide. If Ned Cook could gain access to Elise, so could others.

"You're right Mom, I'll call Scott now."

Gordon was about to leave when the surgeon entered the room.

"Dr. Tracy?" The look on his face was grave.

Rising slowly, the fear welling up inside her, Dianne stammered, "Oh God, NO!"

Gordon was by her side in an instant, offering support with his arm.

"Dr. Tracy, your husband is alive. However, he is in critical condition."

Dianne let out a breath she didn't realize she'd been holding. "Please, sit down, and we'll discuss the surgery so far."

All three of them sat down. Gordon and Dianne listened intently as the surgeon began to explain what had been, and still was, going on in the OR.

"We are almost halfway through this surgery. We have removed most of his spleen; unfortunately, it was too damaged to be saved. We also stopped the internal bleeding by making repairs to several severed smaller arteries. We also had to repair a tear in his liver. This was tricky, but it has decreased the amount of blood loss."

All Dianne could do was fight to hold back the tears that were threatening to fall. All she could think about was: could I, should I have done more at the crash site? Gordon was just trying to understand and absorb exactly what was going on with his father.

"We are, at the moment, fusing the broken ribs so that they align and heal correctly. Once we have these immediate injuries taken care of, we can monitor the brain swelling more closely."

"Brain swelling?" Gordon all but choked the words out.

"Yes, Mr. Tracy suffered trauma to his brain and although the swelling is stable at present, we need to closely monitor its condition. Unfortunately, we can't try to fix everything in one surgery. His body wouldn't be able to stand any more traumas at this point. If we did proceed, I'm afraid it could end his life."

The Doctor was trying to be as sympathetic, yet realistic as he dared. The outlook so far, for his patient, was not good. "Do either of you have any questions for me at this point?"

Dianne spoke softly "Yes, umm... did the IR personnel give you all the correct information about my husband's injuries when they brought him in?"

The Surgeon was a little surprised at the question but answered her "Yes, they did an outstanding job. If they hadn't, we might not have been able to repair the vital injuries first. We knew exactly what needed to be done. Had we not, the outcome may have been a lot worse."

He offered a small smile and advised them he needed to get back to the OR. "Thank you, sir." Gordon held out his hand and the surgeon shook it, nodded to them both and returned to the OR.

A soft sob and snuffle from behind him made Gordon turn back to Dianne. "Oh Gordon, what if he doesn't make it? What if he..."

She couldn't finish her words because the threatening tears fell and she sobbed her heart out.

"Mom, he'll make it, he has to. He wouldn't dare leave you, not now."

He took her in his arms and that was how Scott and Grandma found them upon their arrival.

Post by FrankieCTB2 on 02/07/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out

Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Tue, 24 Jul 2012 01:22:17 GMT

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Brandon's body sagged from total exhaustion. The rescue had been long and taxing and all he wanted to do was retire to his apartment. But that was impossible at the moment as his team-mates were bombarding him with questions. He answered each of them, directly and without hesitation. Then Kat brought up the incident with the rescue capsule.

"Brandon, I understand Virgil had some problem with the cable when you were trying to bring Miss Collins up. Can you elaborate? Dom wasn't too forthcoming," Kat asked.

Christopher wandered over, stroking a sleeping Asterix.

"Yes, please enlighten us all." He smiled. "Tell us how you were being so manly and heroic."

Kat frowned. "That doesn't sound very friendly, Christopher. Brandon was on the rescue and not you."

"Sorry. Brandon," Christopher said, looking suitably cowed. "How did you get it sorted out?"

Brandon glared at Christopher, not liking the sarcasm.

"It was simple enough. Dominic gave me a boost out the hatch and I climbed the cable to Thunderbird Two. Then I unfouled the line and raised them both up." Brandon described it like it was something he did every day.

"I think you were very brave, Brandon. After all, it was your very first rescue," Kat said to the aquanaut. She turned to the pilot with a cross look. "Let's see how you are on your first rescue, Christopher. You may act a bit different once you have encountered danger. Don't be so hard on him!"

"Well, I'm sure that it was a very tiring rescue and Brandon needs his sleep," Christopher commented, yawning.

"Yes," Kat added, "you need your rest. You acted very bravely today, taking part in your first rescue. I am sure Christopher thinks the same, don't you?" she said, turning to the young man holding his cat.

"Yes, Kat." Christopher nodded sagely, a smile playing on his lips.

"I hope you mean it. You should, you know," Kat replied, noting the smile was not that pleasant.

"Oh, I do," Christopher said. "Very much." Christopher held Asterix up to Brandon. "Say goodnight to Brandon, Asterix."

"Hey! Back off with the cat!" Brandon shouted as the cat took a swipe at him with a set of sharp claws.

"Touchy bleeder, isn't he?" Christopher commented.

Kat shouted, "Don't be so nasty, he may not like cats!" She smiled at Brandon. "Are you okay?"

"Yeah, Kat, I'm okay." Brandon glared at Christopher. "You better keep that hairy furball away from me!" Brandon's face was full of anger.

"I can't guarantee that he won't pay you a visit," Christopher said. Realizing he'd gone too far, he

held out his hand. "Sorry. Start again?"

Brandon looked at Christopher's outstretched hand. Giving a sniff of disdain, he turned his back to Christopher.

"Honestly, you two!" Kat remarked. "You haven't known each other very long. I think you should both shake hands. You both are a part of IR with very different roles and I really don't want to see two of my newest friends acting this way; it seems so childish. You are both grown men, I think, so please, shake hands."

Christopher stood there, hand outstretched, Asterix squirming in his other hand. "Brandon?" he asked. Brandon reluctantly took Christopher's hand, giving it a weak shake.

"It's a start." Christopher smiled. "Let's hope it gets stronger over time."

"Yes, I hope so too," said Kat. "I know we are all different, but we must make an effort, especially when we are working on a rescue."

"I agree," Christopher said, "but I think that friend Brandon needs a kip; he looks absolutely knackered."

"Yes, you look all in," Kat added. "Go and have shower and freshen up then have a long sleep. You deserve it."

As Brandon turned to leave, Christopher picked up Asterix and waved a paw at him. "Bye-bye, Brandon."

Post by MagicMaster8, TheWrongTrousers and Tawnyangel22 on 02/07/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Tue, 24 Jul 2012 01:32:30 GMT
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Sunday, January 26, 12:45 a.m., Mt. Sinai Hospital, New York City

Emily Tracy strode over and sat down next to Dianne, handing her a tissue.

"Now, you tell me all that's gone on since you got here, Dianne. Scott told me about the rescue, but I want to know what kind of condition my son is in and what his prognosis is."

Dianne accepted the tissue and sat up, extricating herself from Gordon's embrace with a small smile of gratitude. She wiped her eyes and took a deep breath, and proceeded to tell Emily what the surgeon had just told her. Gordon got up from the sofa and motioned to Scott that they should speak outside.

"There's more," Gordon wasted no time in getting to the point.

"Now what?" Scott asked impatiently.

"Ned Cook's been sniffing around for a scoop on Dad and the crash. He managed to get into Elise's room but a nurse threw him out. He's also tried to get to Mom."

"Damn!" Scott muttered under his breath.

"Scott, you're going to have to tell Elise what's going on. Ned won't give up on a story. We both know that."

Scott contemplated finding Ned Cook and telling him what he really thought about him, but then decided talking to Elise was more of a priority. He looked at Gordon's serious expression.

"You're right, she deserves to know the truth. I can only imagine what she's been thinking up 'til now."

"Why don't you go now? If the surgeon comes in, I'll come and get you."

Scott nodded and walked to Elise's room.

She was actually awake, due to sleeping on and off most of the day, she no longer felt as weary. The meal had helped. A soft knock on her door brought her attention back from daydreaming.

Oh no, not that Cook guy again! She was about to alert the nurses' station when a familiar head poked its way through the door.

"Scott?" Elise was quite taken back. She hadn't expected a visitor in the middle of the night, especially this one.

"May I come in?"

"Sure, please do."

Scott entered the room, and for the first time noticed the black eye and large bruised cheek as he approached the bed.

"How are you feeling Elise?"

"I'm okay. Hurts now and again, but I'll survive."

Scott sat down on the bed next to her. Oh boy! Where do I start?

"Elise, there's something I need t...."

Elise cut him off. "Scott, just tell me what the hell's going on?" She was becoming angry and upset.

He took hold of her hand and spoke softly, hoping it would calm her some. "Elise, what I'm about

to tell you is of utmost secrecy and vital it stays that way."

Elise didn't like the sound of that.

"Just spit it out, Scott! I want to know what's going on, I heard your voice on your dad's watch device. You said International Rescue, didn't you?"

Scott looked sheepishly at her. "Yes," he replied.

Elise sighed and lay back against the pillows. "Oh great!" came her sarcastic reply.

Scott looked at her for a moment, annoyed that she was angry about something he really had no control over.

"Yeah, I said International Rescue. They came to rescue you, didn't they?"

"Yes, they did, and so did Mr. Tracy's wife! I don't remember the whole thing too much, but I do remember her being there. So, explain to me how she and International Rescue just happened to be in the same place at the same time?" Her tone had become less angry, it was now as if she were begging for an answer to her confusion.

"Scott, please tell me," she pleaded.

He looked down for a few seconds and then back at her, "Elise, my father, Jeff Tracy, is the head of International Rescue. My brothers and I are part of that team. My stepmom is too. That's why you heard me calling as IR on my Dad's watch." He waited for her response.

Elise just looked at him for a minute or two, and then responded, "You mean I was flying the head of International Rescue, all over New Hampshire, and I may have been responsible for his death? For crying out loud, Scott! He could've... we could've been killed and...."

Before she could finish, Scott interjected, "Calm down Elise, the crash wasn't your fault, and you know it. It was an accident."

Elise lowered her eyes away from Scott's. "I know, but I can't help feeling responsible somehow."

Scott's voice also became calmer. "Elise, you probably saved my father's life."

"I don't think so, Scott, I just did what any downed pilot with our training would do--survive."

He squeezed her hand as a gesture of understanding. He told her how Jeff was doing, and then asked her what she recalled about the flight and crash. She told him what she could and then he asked, "Elise, what were you and my father doing in New Hampshire?"

"It's supposed to be a surprise for Mrs. Tracy."

Scott blinked a couple of times before asking, "What kind of surprise?"

"Your dad wanted to buy a honeymoon cottage as a late Valentine's gift, so he asked me to fly him up there. We were supposed to be back in time so he could call her." Her voice trailed off as she finished the sentence.

She asked some more about the rescue and Scott told that yes, he had been there, and also told her that he knew of Ned Cook's little visit to her.

"Ned Cook is just the first, I'm afraid," he said, making a face. "As soon as it's known that you were the pilot of the helijet, the press will be all over you. Tracy Industries will do what it can to protect you from the newshounds, and I'm sure the hospital will too, for as long as you're here. But when you're discharged... that's a different story." He gazed at her. "Elise, we'd like to get you out of the spotlight as soon as you can leave here." A twinkle sparkled in his eye, the first bit of humor he had felt in hours. "What do you say to a visit to a South Pacific island?"

"Excuse Me?" was her stunned reply. Scott allowed himself a small chuckle at her reaction.

"I want you to think about coming to stay with us, at our home, which doubles as the HQ for International Rescue. You'll get the best care and there's plenty of sun! It'll give you time to recoup, and Ned Cook and the likes of him won't ever find you. Will you come?" He then held up his hands and added, "No hidden agenda--I promise."

Elise had to smile at how ridiculous he looked sitting there with his hands in the air. "This is a lot to absorb, but I promise I will think about it, and let you know before I leave the hospital, okay?"

He smiled. "Okay. I'm holding you to that promise. I need to get back to the others and see how my Dad's doing."

"I understand, and let me know, too, when you can."

"Sure, no problem."

Scott left the room and Elise lay there thinking about their conversation. Her entire world as she knew it had just changed, and she hadn't even gotten out of bed.

Post by FrankieCTB2 and Tikatu on 03/07/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Tue, 24 Jul 2012 01:38:53 GMT
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Scott stepped out of the room, and spoke to the nurse on duty at the desk.

"Can we get some security for Ms. Collins during her stay here? I'm afraid that the news media will be all over her very soon."

"You can call the security head in the morning. We nurses will take care to see she's not disturbed tonight."

"Okay. Thank you," Scott said gratefully. Then he hurried down the hall to the VIP lounge. Gordon got up and moved to speak with him.

"Everything okay with Elise?" he asked. Scott nodded.

A cry from Dianne drew their attention. Her face had drained of color.

"What's wrong, dearie?" Emily asked, concerned. Dianne shook her head.

"When the surgeon went through what they were doin' in the OR, did he mention the puncture?" she asked Gordon.

"Puncture?" he responded, shaking his head. "No, he didn't."

"They've missed it! I know they've missed it! You father has a small puncture of the lung. It's on the backside of his left lung. It's not big but I know, I know, that I found it and put it on the treatment list!" Dianne lifted her bleak face to her stepsons. "They've missed it!"

Gordon made to leave. "Well, we can just tell them about it and they'll fix it."

"No, we can't, Gords," Scott said, his own face paling. "They'll want to know how we know about it. And we can't exactly tell them, now can we?"

"No," Gordon whispered.

Emily took a deep breath, and pulled Dianne closer. "Well, we can pray. And we'll just have to pray that they find it before the surgery is over, won't we?"

Gordon couldn't stand it any longer. He hated feeling helpless, so announced he was going to call John and Alan and give them an update.

"Tell them to pray for their father, Gordon."

"I will, Grandma," he said, and giving Emily a hug, he left the room.

"Never could sit still, that one, always gotta be doin' sumthin'!" Emily said to no one in particular.

"How much longer do you think they'll be, Mom?" Scott wanted to know.

"Ah don't know, Scott. Ah just wish Ah could be in there."

Gordon had found an empty, quiet room and called his brothers on his comm-watch.

"Well, how bad is it Gordon?" demanded John.

"It's bad. Dad's still going to critical even after this surgery," replied Gordon. He continued to explain to both of them about the brain swelling and possibly more surgeries.

"I'm coming down there! John, how soon can you get up here and get me outta this tin can!" Alan Tracy was ranting and raving at this point. He didn't want to be in TB5; he wanted to be with his father.

"Hold on, Al! Relax, will ya? John can't come to get you, he's in charge of base."

The disgruntled noises and various cuss words indicated that Alan was not pleased.

"Alan, look, we'll organize something and get you and John here ASAP, but until then. bro, you got to sit tight."

Yeah, preferably sooner than later, if you don't mind," John chimed in, just as unhappy, but fully understanding the situation.

"John, please let everyone know what's going on will ya? I'll call back soon."

"Sure thing Gordon, give my love to everyone and FAB." John signed off.

"Yeah, whatever, and I love them all, too," came Alan's reply and he too signed off. Rolling his eyes at his younger brother's attitude, Gordon made his way back to the waiting room, just in time to see a very tired looking surgeon enter before him.

"Mr. Tracy has been taken to recovery, then he'll be moved to ICU as soon as the anesthesia wears off. He has several broken bones, including a fractured vertebra and scapula. We'll be setting the long bones and fusing the vertebra and the scapula. The foot has multiple fractures and will require a separate surgery." The surgeon shook his head. "He is still in delicate and critical condition. But at the moment, our biggest worry is the swelling of the brain."

"When can we see him, Doctor?" Emily asked.

"You may visit briefly when he is moved to ICU," the doctor said wearily.

Dianne looked up at him. "Ah'm stayin' with him."

"Dr. Tracy..." the surgeon began.

"Don' argue with me. Ah have practicin' privileges through Doctors Without Borders and Ah'm staying."

"I'm too tired right now to argue with anyone," the surgeon replied. "We'll let the administration decide whether or not you stay, Doctor."

"Was there anything else you found durin' the surgery that we should know about?" she asked tensely."

"No, there wasn't."

The sound of pin dropping on shag pile carpet could have been heard. Scott, Gordon and Emily exchanged glances. Dianne held back the voice that was screaming inside of her.

"Ah see. Now who do Ah see about stayin' with mah husband?" She glared at the surgeon, daring him to confront her again.

"Follow me, Dr. Tracy." He led the way and Dianne followed him out of the room.

The second the door closed, Gordon all but came unhinged. Scott reassured him over and over that Dianne would be able to watch for the first sign of trouble with Dad and alert the staff. It took a lot of reassurance from Emily, also. When her red-haired grandchild came unglued, he took a lot of persuading to come around to everyone else's way of reasoning.

Dianne spoke with the necessary personnel and after dropping the Tracy name and the words "donation of a substantial size" in the right ears, she was allowed to stay on a cot in Jeff's private ICU room. She all but flew down the corridor to where he had been lodged. He was currently breathing on his own... A good sign... but his face was looking more swollen due to the cranial bleeding. She looked over the monitors, silently checking off everything in her head. Gently she lifted her hand to his forehead and brushed her fingers across it.

"Ah'm here darlin'. And Ah'm not leaving you. Ah love you, Jeff Tracy." She wiped away the tears that had started to fall. She didn't plan on using the cot that had been set up for her; she was going to watch Jeff for the first inkling of a problem. She'd be damned if she was going to lose him now.

Scott came in on quiet feet, gasping as he saw his father's injuries. "Oh, damn. I had no idea it was this bad; that he'd look this bad." He shook his head. "Any sign of that puncture?" he asked quietly.

Dianne shook her head. "Ah'm sure Ah saw it, but Ah'd rather that th' monitors and Ah were wrong than he's got one that the surgeons didn't catch."

"I understand." Scott paused. "Gordon's really worked up about it."

Dianne sighed. "Ah'm sorry. I jes' hope...." She suddenly stood as her ears caught the change in Jeff's breathing, a hitch had developed and his blood oxygen levels were dropping as he struggled to breathe. Dianne pushed the panic button, and an alarm rang out. Nurses, and the doctor on duty came running in, pushing Dianne and Scott aside.

"What...?" Scott asked his stepmother. Her gaze was fixed on Jeff as the surgeon came in, holding the doctor's note pad from Thunderbird Seven. He was scrolling through the problems listed and then the color drained from his face.

"Damn! We missed something! Get him back to the OR, stat!" The surgeon's gaze met Dianne's look of fear and knowing, then he hurried out, following the bed that held Jeff as it rolled out into the hall. Scott grabbed Dianne as she nearly collapsed, her knees suddenly giving way.

"You were right, Mom," he murmured in her ear as he guided her to the chair. "You were right when you examined him and you were right to insist on being here."

"Yes, Ah know, Scott. The question is: can they repair it without killin' him!"

Raising his left arm, Scott called Gordon on the comm-watch. "Gordon! It's Dad, they've rushed him back into the OR. Mom was right; they'd missed the lung puncture! I'm with Mom, she's not doing good, tell Grandma for me will you?"

"FAB" was the only reply Scott received and he knew it was because Gordon was too shocked to say anything else.

Scott then made a command decision. "Mom, I'm not going to call base just yet. There's no point in them worrying twice as much as we already are. I want to wait until we hear something positive."

Dianne nodded in agreement. She was too numb to say anything else. She couldn't believe this was happening. Finally finding the words, all she could say was "Scott, what if this kills him?"

Scott didn't have an answer so he just embraced Dianne as she collapsed against him.

Post by FrankieCTB2 and Tikatu on 03/07/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Tue, 24 Jul 2012 01:39:45 GMT
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Nikki retreated to her apartment and sat down on her bed. Her thoughts shifted from the rescue to her family. She had no idea what she would do if it were her own family member out there.

Nikki thought back to how John spoke to Elise over the radio. Even though it was his father out there, he kept a cool head. Something that she probably wouldn't be able to do if she was in his situation.

She silently prayed for the two victims. God, please protect Jeff and Elise as they begin their road to recovery. I also ask for you to watch over their families and help them to get through this tough time.

She laid down on her bed and continued to think about earlier events.

Post by Nikki-browneyes1 on 03/07/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Tue, 24 Jul 2012 01:43:47 GMT

Sunday, February 26, 2:10 a.m., Mt. Sinai Hospital, New York City

"Gordon, I swear if you don't stop pacin' child, you'll wear a hole in the carpet!" Emily had watched him pace for the last 20 minutes and was losing patience with her fourth grandson.

"I can't Grandma, sorry, but I just can't sit still. Not while Dad's in there again," he said, meaning the OR.

Grandma gave in this time, seeing her own worries mirrored on Gordon's face.

Lord, please let my son live. I know I've asked a lot for my son and grandsons over the years, and I may have used up my allowances with you, but, Lord, one more time, for my grandsons and my son's new family. I'm not asking for myself, but for them. Please don't take him away like this.

Emily sent up her silent prayer while Gordon continued to fret and pace.

Dianne sipped the bitter coffee that the nurses provided. I swear, part of our donation will be for a decent coffee service for these people! she thought, trying to divert her thoughts from where her heart was. Scott was hanging around the nurses' station, hoping to find out any news. The nurses there were taken with the handsome Tracy son, his good looks and his famous name made more than one of them wish they could catch his eye. But the ICU supervisor put the kibosh on any budding attempts by reminding her colleagues that this was a patient's son and he would be in no mood for flirting.

So it was that Scott was the first one to see the surgeon come out from the operating theaters and lead a parade of nurses and interns surrounding a bed, a bed piled high with equipment and surrounded by a forest of IV poles but holding a person, a living person, his breathing aided by a ventilator but his heart beating. Scott hurried to Dianne's side.

"Mom, they're coming! They're bringing him back!" He beat the rolling bed by a few moments. Dianne stood aside as the nurses hooked Jeff up to monitors and more monitors. But as soon as the number of nurses thinned out, she rushed to his side.

"Dr. Tracy. I am so sorry. There was a small puncture in his lung, on the underside. The IR people catalogued it. But we... I... missed it," the surgeon said softly. "It's a good thing you were here. Your quick actions...."

Dianne cut him off. "Ah am aware of my actions and their consequences, Doctor. Now, please, leave us alone before Ah let mah temper get th' bettah of me." The doctor looked at Scott, who stood impassively, then turned on his heel and left.

"You were hard on him, Mom," Scott said, moving behind her so he could better see his father.

"Ah know, son. But damn it! I gave him enough clues! He should have gone back over the notes more thoroughly!" Dianne said angrily. She glanced up at her oldest stepson. "You'd best go tell your brother and Emily. Mebbe let one of them come back for a few minutes."

"FAB, Doc," Scott said, squeezing her shoulder and getting a slight smile for his troubles.

Gordon stopped pacing, but only because Scott had walked through the door. Two sets of eager eyes bore down on Scott.

"Dad's back in his room; looks like the got the puncture fixed just in time."

"Oh, thank heavens!" Emily was on her feet hugging both her grandsons and sending another silent prayer--of thanks.

"Mom said that one of you could go and see him for a few minutes."

Gordon hesitated, looking at his Grandmother. She understood.

"Go, go son, I'll be along in a while."

Gordon hugged her again and went to see his father.

"How's Dianne, Scott?"

"Mom's angry that they missed this. I am, too, for that matter."

"Well, they found it, an' fixed it, and that's all I'm worried about right now. Your father is a stubborn man, Scott Tracy; this won't beat him. You'll see. I didn't raise Grant's son to just up and leave me and you boys like this!" And with that she sat back down. Scott looked lovingly at this amazing woman. She'd outlive them all, of that he was sure.

"Mom?" Gordon asked gingerly as he entered his father's room.

"Gordon!" Dianne embraced him as they stood by Jeff's side. Gordon looked down at his father and tears welled in his eyes. He'd never seen his father so helpless, so vulnerable.

"You're gonna make it, Dad." Gordon squeezed Jeff's hand and then leaned closer to softly whisper, "I love you, Dad," in his father's ear. Then he stood and turned to Dianne, tears reflected in her eyes, too.

"I'll go get Grandma now."

Dianne nodded her agreement. "He loves you too, Gordon." she said gently. Now it was Gordon's turn to just nod, before closing the door after him.

Gordon headed slowly back to the VIP waiting room, hands in his pockets, thoughts on his father. So it was that he didn't see the blonde woman who pulled up beside him. She saw him, however.

"Gordon?"

Startled, Gordon looked up, and then smiled slightly. "Lady Penelope! It's good to see you."

"I came as soon as I heard. How is he?"

"It's been a near thing, Lady P. I've got to get my grandma and let her go back to see him. Come along; Scott can tell you more."

The IR agent nodded and followed the ginger-haired Tracy son. They entered the VIP waiting area where Scott and Emily waited.

"Grandma, you can go back now," Gordon said. The tiny woman embraced her grandson, then the blonde who followed him in.

"It's good to see you, Penelope. I'm sure that Jeff will be glad of your support. Now, please point me in the direction of my son's room?"

Scott smiled slightly and directed his grandmother to Jeff's room at ICU. After she left, Penelope said, "Now, tell me everything, from beginning to end."

Post by FrankieCTB2 and Tikatu on 04/07/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Tue, 24 Jul 2012 01:51:57 GMT
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Sunday, February 26, 2068, 6 a.m., Mt. Sinai Hospital, NYC

Penelope stood just outside the door to Jeff's hospital room, gazing at the occupants. She had just returned from settling in at the Tracy family penthouse. The boys had taken Emily there in hopes of getting her to rest, and Penelope had gone along to help. They knew that nothing short of a major explosion would remove Dianne from Jeff's side, so the boys asked Penelope if she would select some clean clothes to bring for their stepmother to wear. She felt strange going into Jeff and Dianne's rooms at the penthouse, but in the end she had chose some comfortable slacks and blouses and brought along shower gels and shampoos so that Dianne could use what facilities there were.

It was strange and painful for her to see Jeff lying there so pale and still, his face bruised and swollen, his forceful personality diminished, his form helpless. Penelope tore her eyes away from the bed and focused them instead on Dianne, taking in the red-rimmed eyes and the tense look of worry and fear. She watched as Dianne gently brushed back a lock of silver hair from Jeff's forehead, her touch feather-light.

I could have been the one sitting there, Penelope thought, a wave of regret and envy suddenly surfacing. She tamped down on it mercilessly. I could have been. But Jeff and I weren't meant to be.

Penelope's mind rolled back to the day when she got an unexpected and frantic call from Emily

Tracy, telling her all about, "...the new lady doctor. Mark my words, Lady Penelope. She's a gold-digger and no mistake. She's after our Jeff and before you know it, she'll have him, too, if you don't step up and speak your mind."

"But, Mrs. Tracy," Penelope had remonstrated, "If Jeff isn't interested in me...."

"Land's sakes, child! You'll never know if he is until you ask! This isn't the 20th century, you know. You've known my son long enough to do the asking."

Penelope's sense of decorum balked at what Emily was suggesting. It was true that she loved Jeff and would like to be the woman in his life. But she felt that she had made her feelings clear through her actions; inviting him places, especially that vacation at her ranch at Bongo-Bongo. She had hoped that he would have clearly seen her intentions from that weekend, but... he didn't. She knew that he still mourned Lucille and supposed that was the reason he hadn't really made any romantic move towards her.

If he's still mourning his late wife, nothing this doctor can or will say or do will move him. I have nothing to fear, she had thought at the time.

The phone calls from Grandma came frequently until one day the old woman had different, triumphant news to share.

"Yep, she's giving him the cold shoulder. The silent treatment. Whatever it was they argued about must have been a doozy. I expect her to pack herself and her children up and go back to where she came from any day now."

Penelope was surprised at how relieved she was at the news. You would have thought the sky was going to fall! I'll just wait for the news that she's left and then pay Jeff a social call.

The days turned into weeks, and the weeks turned into months. Grandma Tracy called infrequently now, mostly with news of John's recovery.

"He's getting better every day, Lady Penelope. I should have known that she'd at least stay until the end of his recovery; she seems to have that much professionalism in her. But," and here the old woman paused and when she continued, her voice sounded as if she were puzzled, "Jeff's been awfully short with everyone lately. He keeps looking at the doctor as if he wants her to say something to him. Seems he's bothered by her silent treatment. Well, I suppose anyone would be. She's kept it up long enough."

Three days later, Grandma Tracy called again, all in a dither. "I don't know what happened, Lady Penelope, but they are talking again. She's even smiling at him! And they've gone out for a long walk on the beach. Really, child! If you want to keep my son, you'd best get out here and do something!"

Penelope hesitated. She felt so odd, contemplating what she knew Emily wanted her to do. She went around and around in her head and heart about it. At first, it was only when she had free time to think, but then the subject and her thoughts about it began to press more and more into her work time, distracting her when she should be focusing on whatever was before her. It was

when her daydreaming nearly cost her a bloodletting at the hands of a saboteur she was chasing that she resolved to do something about Jefferson Tracy.

She flew out to the Island, unannounced and unexpected. The boys were out on a rescue, but Jeff greeted her warmly and arranged for her to take the guest suite. Not the one she usually took, two doors down from his corner suite, next to Scott's room, but around the corner, next to John's room. The room she usually took was now occupied by the doctor and her daughter, while the one next to that had been handed over to the doctor's two sons.

Once she had freshened up, she went to the lounge and there she got her first glimpse of her rival. She was not impressed. The woman was older, greying, and though she was good-looking, Penelope knew herself to be beautiful; fashion model material to be precise. She walked up to the doctor and held out a lily-white hand, smiling.

"Lady Penelope Creighton-Ward."

The woman turned dark brown eyes to her and took the hand. "Dr. Dianne Koch. Pleased t' make yoah acquaintance." The southern drawl grated on Penelope's ears. Penelope sat down beside her, prepared to engage her in conversation, but her plans were foiled as Jeff called to the doctor.

"Doctor, Virgil needs you here."

The doctor turned briefly to Penelope. " 'Scuse me," she said as she got up to face Virgil's picture. Step by step she took him through a medical procedure and when she was through, a grateful Virgil gave her good news that the patient was stable.

"You did a good job theah, Vee."

"Well, I had a good teacher, Doc."

Jeff added his praise and Dianne sat back down. Penelope noticed that the two adults used their formal titles with each other. Good. There may be nothing to fear here after all.

"Why didn't you go out on the rescue?" Penelope asked bluntly. Dianne smiled.

"Ah'm still in trainin' when it comes t' rescue procedure," she explained. "Besides, Ah got a sick one in th' infirmary." She looked over at Jeff. "Speakin' o' which, Mistah Tracy, Ah'd better go down an' tend t' Tin-Tin."

"Of course, Doctor. Dismissed."

Dianne left the room, and Jeff turned his attention back to the rescue. After a moment, he looked over at Penelope and smiled.

"To what do we owe the honor of this visit?"

Penelope said airily. "Oh, I hadn't seen you and the family for some time and decided I should pay a visit. Purely a social call, I assure you."

"You're welcome here any time, Penelope," Jeff said absently, his attention mostly on the rescue.

Penelope sat back and smiled.

Over the next few days, Penelope observed Jeff and Dianne together. Since she was a guest, she supposed that Jeff was paying more attention to her than he allowed himself to pay to Dianne in her presence. But still, it was not as much as he had done in the past when she visited. Her presence had not stopped their evening walks on the beach and more than once they returned laughing and smiling at each other. Penelope's shrewd senses told her that Dianne was smitten with Jeff and though she refused to believe the reverse was true, she could see a definite connection between the two. A connection that she did not like. A connection that she was going to sever if she had her way.

To be sure of her facts, she paid a visit to Tin-Tin in the infirmary. The Malaysian girl had been laid low with a nasty flu and a bout of anemia. She had been confined to the infirmary until Dianne was satisfied that Tin-Tin had caught up on her rest and was fully recovered.

No one else seemed to be in the sick room, and Tin-Tin was dozing. Penny was loath to wake her, but she stubbed her toe on one of the diagnostic beds. Her not-very-ladylike curse woke the younger woman.

"Lady Penelope! I had heard you were here. I'm so glad to see you."

Penny smiled and moved over to her bedside. They chatted briefly about Tin-Tin's convalescence and about François Lemaire's latest fashions. Then Penelope skillfully turned the conversation to her topic of choice: Jeff and Dianne.

"What do think there, Tin-Tin? You're experienced at reading people. Is there any romance brewing?"

Tin-Tin's lovely face took on a thoughtful frown. "I do know that Mr. Tracy was not himself all the time that Dianne was angry with him. He was short with people. It really seemed to bother him that she wasn't talking to him. But after he apologized, things turned around dramatically..."

"Apologized? For what?"

"Oh, you didn't know? He didn't tell her about IR. She learned by accident; John's accident to be precise. She was very, very angry at what she saw as deceit on Mr. Tracy's part. After all, she has children to consider and it might have affected her decision to come here had she known. He hadn't told her because he said he was waiting to see how trustworthy she would be. But really, she's a physician. As our physician she's bound by law as well as morals to keep such a thing confidential. I felt he should have told her sooner. Then she would have been better prepared for John's surgery." Tin-Tin explained. "Finally, Mr. Tracy apologized for not telling her and that broke the ice. They've been friendly ever since."

"Just friendly?"

Tin-Tin sighed. "Well, I think that Dianne... likes... Mr. Tracy. Well, maybe likes isn't quite strong enough. Though I will say, he was the one to instigate their long walks. Wanted to make up for the time they lost during the Ice Age, as he calls it. I think that he's fond of her and she's become a confidante of sorts."

"But, any more than that?" Penelope pressed. "I really need to know."

"Well, I haven't really seen them touching or even holding hands. Just talking and spending time together. Nothing romantic." Tin-Tin cocked her head. "Why do you need to know?"

"Well, Tin-Tin, part of the reason I'm here is..." Penelope took a deep breath and let her words out in a rush, "...I'm going to ask Jeff to marry me!"

Tin-Tin's eyes widened and her mouth dropped open. "You're going to... what?!"

Penelope nodded. Her own sudden decision startled even her, but part of her wanted to consolidate her position with Jeff and this seemed to be the only way to cut out her rival.

"I'm going to propose! Tonight! I'm going to ask him to take ME for a long walk on the beach and then..." She noticed that Tin-Tin's eyes still bugged out and her mouth was still dropped open. "Well, we're not in the 20th century, you know. A woman can ask a man, can't she?"

Tin-Tin swallowed. "Y-Yes, she can, b-but isn't this rather... sudden?"

Penelope smiled. "Of course not! I've known him for two or three years now. It's time we took our relationship to another level."

Tin-Tin took a deep breath and let it out. Suddenly, a chime began to sound from the panel above her head.

"What's that?" Penelope asked. For the first time, she noticed the upgraded equipment in the sickroom.

"A warning. It thinks that something's not right with me. Dianne will be here any second."

"All right, Tin-Tin. I'll be back later to tell you what he says. Remember, mum's the word!" Penelope put a finger over her lips as she backed up to the door. With a final wink, she was gone.

Later, Penelope heard from Tin-Tin about what had happened after she left. How Dianne had arrived, coming from the office in the sick room, her face pale. Tin-Tin recounted how quiet she seemed as she examined her patient, asking only a few questions and listening to Tin-Tin's heart and chest. How Tin-Tin asked her softly if she had heard the conversation, and how Dianne's drawl had shown when she answered, "Does it mattah?"

Involuntarily, Penelope gasped a little and her thoughts were brought back to the present. Dianne heard the sound and turned her face towards the door. She smiled, just a little and rose from her chair. Penelope returned the expression; a smile of sympathy and understanding on her face as she walked quietly around the patient's bed and embraced Dianne.

"How is he?" she asked softly.

Dianne sighed. "He came out of th' first surgeries jes' fine, Penny. But he had a concussion. We're waitin' for th' brain swellin' to go down and for him t' wake up."

"Why don't I sit with him a while? You get some rest. You look like you could use some," Penelope offered.

Dianne lowered her eyes and smiled slightly. "Everyone wants me t' get some rest. Ah want t' be here when he wakes up."

Penelope nodded in understanding. "Then do you mind if I wait with you?"

"No, Ah don't. Be glad of th' company."

Post by Tikatu on 04/07/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Tue, 24 Jul 2012 01:59:37 GMT
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Penelope pulled up another chair and the two women waited in a companionable silence. As Penelope's eyes searched Jeff's face for signs of consciousness, she was plunged again into remembering.

"Jeff, could you indulge me in a walk on the beach this evening?" Penelope asked at dinner, smiling winningly in Jeff's direction. Out of the corner of her eye, she could see the doctor suddenly put down her napkin. Jeff glanced over in Dianne's direction.

"Please, 'scuse me," she said quietly as she rose and left the table. Her children had already finished eating and been excused to their play.

"I suppose I could, Penelope," Jeff replied, his eyes following Dianne as she left. Penny could see his internal battle in his eyes; he wanted to get up and go after the doctor, but decorum required that he stay and entertain his guest. Gordon put down his napkin and excused himself from the table. Gone off to placate the doctor, unless I miss my guess, Penelope thought. She turned to Jeff.

"Excellent. I look forward to it. More coffee? Why, thank you, Kyrano."

As soon as dinner was over, Penelope waited for Jeff near the lounge door. He pulled up the small hovercar that would take them down to the beach level and came halfway up the stairs, stretching forth a hand. She met him and took it. Walking down together, they took the hovercar along the winding little pathway down to the ocean's side.

The moon was in its first quarter and shed some light on the scene, but nowhere near enough.

Penelope had trouble seeing Jeff's face as she took his arm and they walked slowly along. A light breeze had sprung up, coming off the water, and Penelope breathed in the sweet, salt-laden air.

"This is lovely, Jeff. I wonder why we haven't done this more often."

She could almost hear the gears turning in Jeff's head as he sought for an appropriate reply.

"I guess it's because we've both been so busy, Penny. You in England and me here on the Island."

"Hmm. I suppose that's the reason."

They felt silent as they walked. She could feel the tension in Jeff's arm; he didn't like the silence, it was uncomfortable to him. Finally, she decided to throw caution to the wind.

"You know, Jeff, we've known each other for a while now. In that time, you've come to mean a great deal to me. So much so that I... I think I'm in love with you."

Jeff said nothing but his arm tensed even more. Penelope took her courage in both hands and continued.

"Now, I can't be certain, of course, but I think, looking back at some of your actions, that you might have feelings for me as well." She swallowed hard. "I know you've spent a long time mourning your lovely Lucille. But isn't it time to end all that? Isn't it time to look for love again? Isn't it time to let those feelings show?"

They stopped walking, and Jeff began to speak. "Penny, I..."

She put two fingers to his lips. "Please, Jeff. Let me finish before my courage fails me altogether. What I want to know from you is: would you... will you... will you marry me, Jeff?" She could hear the implied "please" at the end of her question and cursed herself for it.

Jeff said nothing. She could tell by his sharp intake of breath that he didn't expect this, that it was a complete shock to him. She waited, her hopes poised on the edge of a knife.

He took her hand from the crook of his arm, and reached down to grasp the other one.

"Penny, I..." He cleared his throat; it had been choked with emotion, and then took a deep breath. A good sign? she hoped.

"Penelope. I am flattered and shocked beyond all words that you have asked me to marry you. It's come as such a surprise to me. Not that you feel the way you do: you've made that abundantly clear over the past year and a half. But that you would pass by much younger and more virile men to choose me, someone who is old enough to be your father."

Penelope began to laugh. "Jeff, you're not old...." she countered.

He quietly shushed her. "Yes, compared to you, I am old. You are the age of one of my sons,

Penelope. And as mature as you act, I can't get past that age difference. To me, it would be like... like marrying my own daughter. Most men my age would love to have you as a wife: you're beautiful, brave, intelligent." His voice dropped to a near-whisper. "I guess I'm not like most men, Penny. Because most men wouldn't still be mourning their wives after 20 years." He looked at her and she could see the depths of his eyes even in the darkness. "You deserve a man as young and vibrant as you are yourself. A man without the baggage of grief and pain. You deserve so much better than me."

He took another deep breath. "Penelope. As much as I appreciate your proposal and as much as I do care for you, I can't marry you. I'm sorry."

Penelope let go of his hands and took a step away, turning from him and crossing her arms over her chest as if cold. Cold as the ice that now covered her hopes and her heart.

"I don't suppose that your decision has anything to do with the good doctor, does it?" she asked, bitterness creeping into her voice. She heard him step up behind her.

"Dr. Koch? Why would it?" His voice clearly showed his confusion. Penelope spun around to face him.

"Don't you know? Are you blind? That woman is in love with you! And if your mother is to be believed, it's only for your money, not for your own person! She's not young enough to be your daughter, is she? She's safe! You don't have to go through any emotional or mental angst with her!" Penelope was shouting now and she didn't care. She had lost control in her fury. "And if you married her, you'd get that daughter you've always wanted!"

"Dr. Koch? In love with me? How do you know?"

"Oh, please. It's as plain as the nose on your face! The way she hangs on your every word! The soulful looks she gives you! The way she's finagled to walk with you every night even when you've had a guest! Oh, yes! That gold-digging doctor is in love with you, and you, Jefferson Tracy, are the biggest... chump that ever lived! Not only because you can't see it, but because you're letting her lead you down the garden path with your eyes wide open!"

"You're wrong, Penny. Dr. Koch is here as our family physician. True, she's become a confidante of sorts, but I'm the one who...."

Penny gave Jeff a little push. Then started to stride away, back down the beach towards the airstrip. "Believe what you like, Jefferson Tracy. I'm leaving. Leaving you to your fate. Tell Parker I will meet him at the jet and that I want to be off this Island within the half hour! Goodbye!"

She waited for him to run after her, to catch up with her and spin her around, apologizing profusely and drawing her to him in a bruising embrace and kiss. But it didn't happen. And as she made her angry way towards the cliff side hangar door, her tears fell, hot and salty, onto her expensive dress, her feet, and the sand.

"Penny? Lady Penelope?" She heard a masculine voice calling her from afar, but it wasn't Jeff's.

Scott? What is he doing here on the beach?

"Lady Penelope? Wake up."

Penny jerked awake suddenly. She looked around wildly for a moment, trying to get her bearings. Then her eyes lighted on Jeff and she remembered. She looked across the bed to see the top of Dianne's head. Her one-time rival had her head pillowed on one arm and that arm was flung across the edge of the bed. Gordon was there, trying gently to wake her.

The Brit looked up into Scott's blue eyes, so much like his father's. "No change, I gather?"

Scott shook his head. "No." He turned his attention to Dianne, who was blinking blearily at Gordon.

"Mom, why don't you go and get some sleep? We found both of you sitting here napping. Let me watch for a while, huh?"

Dianne gave Scott a look that said clearly: Don't mess with me.

"Ah have a bettah ideah, Scott. Why doesn't Gordon heah go and get some decent coffee for her Ladyship and me whilst you go check on Elise's condition? And mebbe phone back to the Ahland for an update. Or even go home an' start makin' arrangements for th' others to come out heah. Hmm?"

Scott and Gordon looked at each other. Gordon shrugged. "I'll go get the coffee," he said, leaving the room. Scott glared at Dianne for a moment. She regarded him coolly.

"I'll check on Elise," he growled. Then, with a loud huff of air, he turned and left the room.

Dianne looked at Penelope and gave her a slightly bleary smile. "They'ah good boys," she said.

"Yes, they are," Penelope agreed. And the two women fell back into their companionable silence as they watched Jeff Tracy sleep.

Post by Tikatu on 04/07/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Tue, 24 Jul 2012 02:13:40 GMT
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Tracy Island, February 27, 2068

Kat, Nikki and Callie were eating their breakfast.

Some of the rescuers had returned yesterday and Kat and Callie had bombarded Brandon and Dom with questions about the rescue. Kat recalled the animosity between Christopher and Brandon. She had tried to calm the situation and at least the two had ended shaking hands. She

inwardly shook her head; these were two of her newest friends and she liked them both. She hoped that maybe in time they would bury the hatchet and at least, if not be good friends, would be able to work together when a rescue was called.

Suddenly Kat was aware that Brains was talking to her.

"I would like your thoughts on Mr Tracy's seaplane. There is something just not right. I have my suspicions, but I would like to hear what you have to say."

Down in the boat pen, the seaplane had been winched into a dry dock so that the engines could be examined. Brains told Kat what he thought was the problem. Kat looked at the seaplane's engines very carefully. No, she thought, you are wrong, Brains, that is not the problem. She bit her lip; surely he must know what the real problem is. She turned to face him; he was watching her keenly.

Shall I agree with him, or tell him what the problem really is? She decided to be honest.

"Brains, I don't think you are right; in fact, I am sure you are quite wrong in your estimations. The problem you describe would not manifest itself in that way." By peering into the engines, totally forgetting herself in the beauty of the little plane, she went on to explain. "There appears to be something wrong with the compressor, the air is just not getting through and mixing with the fuel sufficiently well."

Brains looked startled. He had to admit that he had set a trick question, just to see how she would cope. She had passed with flying colours, not only correctly identifying the fault, but also being honest enough to tell him that he was wrong.

Brains laughed. "Hey, forgive me, I was just testing you to see how you would react. I was afraid that you might agree with me in an attempt not to go against my judgment."

Kat laughed with him. "Well, to be honest, if I made that kind of decision with FAB 1, then I would not be a very good mechanic, would I?"

For the next two hours, Kat and Brains worked on the seaplane. Kat became totally immersed in her work. She and Brains were forming a very good working relationship. She found herself telling him about her life and work with Lady Penelope. He wanted to know how such a small, feminine young girl had become interested in dirty and sometimes smelly engines. Kat explained that her father used to spend time working and doing up old engines, and by watching him she had become interested in them herself. "Mother was always saying that I used to come in as dirty as he was. I think she would have liked me to have a cleaner hobby, but really, engines just draw me like a magnet."

She added, "I am not really that feminine. I was always a bit of a tomboy at school, trying to compete with my two brothers. I hardly ever wore skirts, feeling much more comfortable in jeans and shorts and T-shirts."

Brains smiled at her; she had a streak of grease across her cheek.

Eventually Brains said. "Come on, grubby, it's time to finish for the day."

Kat straightened her aching back. "Grubby indeed, take a look at yourself," she said and she grinned at the bespectacled young man.

As they walked back to the monorail, Brains said, "You know, I think Mr Tracy made the right decision in taking you on. I had to admit that I was a bit skeptical that a young girl, and such a small one, could tackle the job in hand, but I have been proven wrong."

Kat smiled. "I am glad that I have proved myself capable."

She continued, "I have to admit, though, that learning that this was the headquarters of International Rescue was quite a shock, in fact I think I gave John quite a hard time when he was showing me around."

"Well, he won't hold that against you. In fact, he told me that he was glad you decided to stay."

Once back in her apartment, she peeled off her damp overalls, and after having a shower, changed into a swimsuit and sarong and headed for the pool. Walking through the now silent lounge, it was hard to imagine that just 12 hours ago it had been a hive of activity.

Lisa and Nikki were down by the pool. Kat flopped down beside them. "You look all in," Lisa remarked kindly.

"I have just spent two very intense hours with Brains working on Mr Tracy's seaplane, and now my back is aching."

"You need a massage. Let me help." Kat lay on her front and Lisa started to massage her tense muscles.

"Coo," Nikki said. "That looks so relaxing."

"It is," Kat mumbled, her face buried in her towel.

"There," Lisa said, "that should help."

"Have you settled in okay?" Lisa asked Kat as she rolled over and sat up.

"Yes, thank you. This is so very different from anything I have done in the past, but I shall enjoy the challenge. I enjoyed working with Brains this morning; in fact we have got off to quite a good start. He tried to trick me with a problem, but not only did I correctly diagnose the fault, I told him he was wrong."

Kat looked at Lisa. "That was wonderful, can I book you again, please?"

Lisa laughed. "Any time you feel tense, and I am not working on my daughter, by all means."

Going on to a more sober thought, Kat said, "I hope Mr Tracy is okay."

"So do I," Lisa answered, "but knowing my daughter, she will have something to say about him going off without telling any of us where he was going."

Post by Tawnyangel22 on 04/07/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Tue, 24 Jul 2012 02:16:09 GMT
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Tracy Island, February 26th 2068

Kat excused herself and left Nikki and Lisa still sitting by the pool.

"I think I will try and contact my parents,"

She saw the look that Lisa gave her. "Don't worry, I won't say too much, but they deserve to hear from me."

Lisa nodded. "Yes, of course you must contact your parents."

Kat returned to her apartment. Before contacting her parents, she decided to have a drink and rest for a while.

Going into the kitchen she got some ice out of the ice maker and poured herself a long drink of fresh orange juice, and after adding the ice cubes, she walked to the French windows and went and sat out on the balcony on one of the chairs provided.

For a moment she looked out at the sea shimmering in the distance and at the line of palm trees, which she now knew lined the route for Thunderbird 2 to leave the island.

Suddenly she was lost in thought. She thought of the flight down to the island, meeting Nikki and Christopher. Oh, she smiled to herself, mustn't forget his cat. The warm welcome by Mrs Tracy. Being shown to this apartment. She stretched her legs feeling the luxurious warmth of the sun on her bare arms and legs. Yes, this is a truly wonderful apartment with the best ever view.

She thought about her tour of the island and the shock of being told that it was the headquarters of International Rescue. She was still a bit piqued that she hadn't been told at first. John had been very blunt with her, but later so patient, even though she had given him a hard time. Thinking of John brought a warm feeling. She had begun to like him a lot. She did hope that he would not forget to show her the stars.

Her thoughts strayed onto the rescue. Brains had brought her to the lounge. People she scarcely knew were busy preparing to go on the rescue. She had glimpsed Virgil and Gordon, and two of her new friends, Brandon and Dom had been asked to go on the rescue. They had both looked very nervous.

But now that rescue was over, they had come back, but Mr Tracy was seriously ill in hospital in New York. Kat hoped and prayed that he would recover. She remembered meeting him at Lady Penelope's New Year's Eve party. He was so charming with such a lovely new wife and family. What would happen if...? She shook her head. No, I'm not even going to think about that. He must get better, he has to get better. They all felt so helpless, everyone was going around in a daze. Why was life so unfair, she thought angrily, just when things were going really well and he was increasing International Rescue's personnel? She felt tears pricking her eyes. She rubbed them away angrily. Her thoughts continued to wander.

Brains had been funny, setting her a false problem, but she had told him he was wrong and had apparently passed with flying colours.

Slowly her eyes became heavy and she fell asleep.

Post by Tawnyangel22 on 04/07/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Tue, 24 Jul 2012 02:19:02 GMT
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Tracy Island February 26th

Christopher sat on a lounge chair on the beach.

Asterix was indoors sleeping, or either that he was gamboling about with the children.

He smiled to himself. He hadn't expected the little cat to become such a valued member of the family in such a short time.

It was a distraction that was needed from Mr Tracy's problems, and he hoped upon all hope that he would be better soon and back home where he belonged. Here was a man who had decided to take him on, an ex-RAF pilot who just enjoyed flying. A man who trusted him.

Sighing to himself, he got up from the lounge chair and looked around his surroundings. For the first time in a long time, he was happy.

And with that, he began his walk back to the Villa.

His new home.

Post by TheWrongTrousers on 04/07/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Tue, 24 Jul 2012 02:23:18 GMT
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Sunday, February 26, 2068, 4 p.m., Mt. Sinai hospital, New York City

Dianne stirred from the cot where she had been napping. Jeff's bed had disappeared again; the nurses and doctors had wheeled him down to the imaging labs to check on the brain swelling. There had been little or no change over the past few hours and the surgeon was talking brain surgery next to relieve the pressure. Dianne was worried; she knew how dangerous that would be for Jeff in his current condition.

She sighed, and got up from the uncomfortable bed, rubbing her aching back. She looked at her watch. It's Monday morning back at home. The kids will be leaving soon to come and see Jeff. It will be so hard for them to see him like this. Looking into the mirror over the sink, she took a minute to brush her hair and splash water on her face. Don't want Jeff to wake up to a rat's nest of hair and a filthy face, she thought with a pang, pushing thoughts of his not waking to the back of her mind. A light knocking drew her attention to the doorway. Elise Collins was there, sitting in a wheelchair.

"Dr. Tracy?" she asked hesitantly. Dianne smiled and walked over to her.

"Hello there, Elise. How are you feelin'?" Dianne responded.

"Like I've been kicked by a horse," Elise said frankly. She looked over at the spot where the bed had been. "How's Mr. Tracy?"

Dianne let out a breath. "He's holding his own. We're worried mostly about the brain swellin' right now."

"Dr. Tracy, I'm so sorry that all this happened. I feel so responsible." Elise looked down at her hands. Dianne crouched so she could look Elise in the eye.

"We all know it was an accident, Elise. Please don't beat yourself up about it."

"Yeah, I know. Scott reminded me about that," Elise said wryly. "By the way, have you seen Scott? He asked me a question and I promised him an answer."

"He's gone back to our home to pick up his brothers and sister and bring them out here to see Jeff," Dianne explained.

"Oh." Elise looked keenly at Dianne. "Is it true that you live on an island in the south Pacific?"

Dianne chuckled. "Yes, it's true. Why?"

"Scott suggested that I come out and stay with you for a while. So that the reporters can't hunt me down."

"An excellent idea. Will you come?"

"That's what I wanted to tell Scott. That I will come, if you'll have me."

Dianne smiled, her first real smile in hours. "Of course. We'll make all of the arrangements." She cocked her head at Elise. "Now, would you please tell me what in blazes you and mah husband were doing in New Hampshire?"

"I told Scott. He didn't tell you?" Elise asked.

"No, he didn't."

"Then I won't either. Except to say it was a surprise. A surprise for you."

Tears pricked at Dianne's eyes. "A surprise... for me?" Elise nodded.

"Well, Ah guess Ah'll just have to wait for him to wake up and remember, won't I?" Dianne said, trying to keep her voice from wavering. Suddenly, Jeff's bed appeared behind Elise. Dianne quickly moved the pilot out of the way, so that her husband could be rolled back into his room. Elise was shocked at Jeff's injuries, but still, he looked better to her than he had in the helijet. The doctor on duty followed. He looked at Dianne, and gave her a small smile.

"Good news, Dr. Tracy. The swelling is beginning to do down."

Dianne gasped. "Oh, thank God!" She looked down at Elise, who smiled slightly.

The doctor and nurses plugged Jeff back into his monitors and left, with the doctor giving Dianne an encouraging smile. Dianne immediately took up her position at Jeff's bedside. Elise grabbed onto a nurse's sleeve and the nurse stopped.

"Can you ask Scott to stop by when he gets back?" she asked. Dianne nodded and smiled.

"Don't you worry. We'll make all the arrangements," she repeated.

Elise nodded and the nurse wheeled her out and back to her room.

Dianne stood by the side of the bed for a long while, stroking back Jeff's hair and talking to him in low tones. When she tired of standing, she sat, holding his right hand, being careful not to disturb his IVs. The broken left arm still hadn't been set but Dianne noticed with a pang that the wedding ring had been cut off to accommodate the swollen fingers.

"Ah'll buy you a new ring, love. Ah promise. Just as soon as you're better," she whispered. Her eyes widened and she stood up suddenly as Jeff's head began to move and his eyelids began to twitch. He moaned softly; he had been taken off the ventilator a few hours before when the doctors determined that he could breathe on his own. Finally, the eyelids parted fractionally. Dianne could see his eyes moving around slowly, trying to make sense of where he was, and then they finally focused on her face.

"Hello, love," she said softly, smiling. "Welcome back t' th' land of th' livin'."

Post by Tikatu on 04/07/2004

Subject: Re: The Call Goes Out
Posted by [Tikatu](#) on Tue, 24 Jul 2012 02:24:37 GMT
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With that, we end
Chapter One: The Call Goes Out.
