

IT was comforting with all of them together on the Falcon after the world had changed yet again, but the ship was too small for the fourteen of them. Those who considered themselves more civilised had colonised one of the bedrooms, and the beasts and children and lunatics had been left to fill the other one, but it couldn't go on like this forever.

Eventually, they mutually agreed to descend to earth. There had been mutters about missing the smell of fresh grass and the simple pleasure of a chat with a stranger. Setzer wanted to get some tables installed in the Falcon, and he couldn't very well do that with the rest of them crowding the place.

They gathered in the navigation room to plot a course. Setzer would determine where each person wanted to go, and find the best route connecting each location. Then, at last, he'd have the airship to himself.

He turned to Strago first. "You two are going back to Thamasa, right?"

Strago nodded. "And the assassin's coming with us. Isn't that what we agreed?"

"It appears so," said Shadow. Surprisingly, he didn't seem hugely put out by it.

"And ..." Setzer looked around his companions, thinking about who else might be easy to place. He alighted on Edgar. "Figaro for you?"

"Yes," the king confirmed. He turned to his brother and

opened his mouth to speak, but was interrupted by an explosion of wild limbs and hair as Gau, the only one they hadn't managed to get to join them at the table, barrelled in and made for Sabin himself.

"Uwao!" he cried. "Gau your friend!"

Edgar sighed, but he was smiling. "He's coming with us, then?"

"Us?" Sabin echoed his tone. "I'm going with you?"

Edgar raised an eyebrow. "Forgive me, I had assumed –"

His brother cut him off with a laugh. "Just messing with you. Of course I'm coming with you. Wouldn't abandon my brother, would I?"

"I'll go back to Mobliz," Terra suggested, distracting everyone from the show of brotherly love that was taking place beside them. "I want to check on the children. Katarin will need help with her little one."

Setzer nodded, and marked it on the map. He looked around. "Who else ... Cyan?"

Cyan was silent for a moment, but then said, somewhat sheepishly, "Maranda."

"Maranda?" Celes asked slowly. "As in ...?"

"Cyan, you sly dog!" Edgar exclaimed.

Cyan reddened. "I am inclined to believe that the city would benefit from my ... artificial flowers," he muttered.

"But the real ones are growing back now!" Relm pointed out. Beside her, Strago chuckled.

“Well, if you need any tips, you know where to find me,” said Edgar.

“That will not be necessary, my lord,” replied Cyan in a mild tone.

Edgar winked, which earned him a light slap on the arm from his brother, while Setzer asked, “Gogo?”

“Anywhere but that island,” said the mimic slowly. “Just let me off at the first place you get to.”

Setzer nodded; no surprises there.

The moogle spoke next, and a few people flinched; they still weren't used to the fact that the animal could talk, not least with the kind of immaculate accent that made him sound like a graduate of the Vector scientific academy. “I'll go back to Narshe with Umaro, kupo!” he informed them. “Got to get back to my clan!”

“Right,” said Setzer. “That leaves ...” He trailed off, not sure whether to address Locke and Celes as a unit or separately.

The knight turned to her companion. “Where were you thinking?” she asked softly. “There's nowhere I'm particularly attached to.”

“I... Narshe, too, actually,” said Locke. “There's a few places left to – I mean, I just like it there. Got used to living there before all this happened.”

“Sounds good to me,” Celes consented.

“You're coming with me?” Locke asked shyly. Across the table, Edgar rolled his eyes.

She took his hand. "Of course I am."

While they looked into each other's eyes and Relm made gagging noises, Setzer studied the map. "Right, that's everyone ..."

Locke let go of Celes and bent eagerly over the table. "So if you go this way first –" he began.

"I'm capable of navigating, thank you," Setzer snapped.

"Sorry," said Locke, sounding moderately offended as he leant back. Celes smiled at him, and he forgot his irritation immediately.

The first stop was Mobliz. Gogo departed with a brief nod, and disappeared to who knew where. Terra threw her arms around everyone in turn, even the yeti, and even gave Edgar a kiss on the cheek; he was so flustered that it was as if he'd never seen a woman before.

She turned to address them all. "I don't know what to say," she admitted. "Thank you all for teaching me what it means to be human. Letting me learn how to love. I'll miss you all so much."

"We'll visit," said Edgar, still dazed.

Terra raised a hand in a wistful wave, and left.

Setzer headed to Thamasa next, and Strago, Shadow and Relm prepared to disembark with a flurry of hugs and handshakes – noticeably fewer from the younger man, although he clapped both Sabin and Cyan on the back. "We'll meet again,"

said Strago confidently, as the three of them turned to leave. “Byeeee!” yelled Relm, and they were gone.

Cyan got ready to leave at Maranda, and shook everyone’s hand solemnly. “My lords and lady, it has been an honour to serve you,” he intoned.

“It’s been an honour for us, too, Cyan,” said Sabin earnestly. “I’ll write.”

“Since when do you write to people?” Edgar asked in bemusement. Sabin shrugged as Cyan departed.

Setzer headed north to Narshe, while Umaro screwed up his face in extreme concentration, and eventually spoke. “Umaro say ... good luck,” he grunted. “Good luck for future. If need ...” he looked at Mog uncertainly.

“Assistance, kupo!” Mog suggested.

Umaro nodded gravely. “If need assistance, call Umaro. Me help Umaro friends.”

There was a stunned silence. “Thank you, Umaro,” said Celes eventually, being the first to remember her manners.

“See you again, kupo!” Mog exclaimed, and the moogle and the yeti left the ship, with a little difficulty given their unusual anatomies.

Celes and Locke shook hands with the three remaining men – Gau had run off somewhere again – but both found themselves being pulled into embraces. “Don’t mess it up with her,” Edgar murmured into Locke’s ear. “She’s the best thing that ever happened to you.”

“You’re not kidding,” Locke agreed.

Edgar grinned. “Warn me before you come visiting, so I can lock up all the valuables.”

Locke and Celes left, their hands in each other’s again.

“Last stop, chaps,” Setzer said briskly, and pointed the airship towards Figaro. Sabin succeeded at extricating Gau from the pipe he had wrapped himself around and joined his brother in shaking Setzer’s hand warmly before they departed.

At last, Setzer was alone. He locked the external exits, poured a generous glass of whisky, and smiled to himself. The world awaited.