

An aerial, high-angle view of a large commercial airplane that has crashed in a grassy field. The aircraft is oriented diagonally from the top right towards the bottom left. The fuselage is heavily damaged, with a large section of the front fuselage missing or crushed. The wings are spread out, and the engines are visible. Debris is scattered around the wreckage. In the background, there is a paved road and a line of trees with yellow foliage, suggesting autumn. The overall style is that of a comic book illustration, with bold lines and a limited color palette of greens, yellows, and greys.

HAZARD

LAST FLIGHT

Chapter 1: Signs and Signals

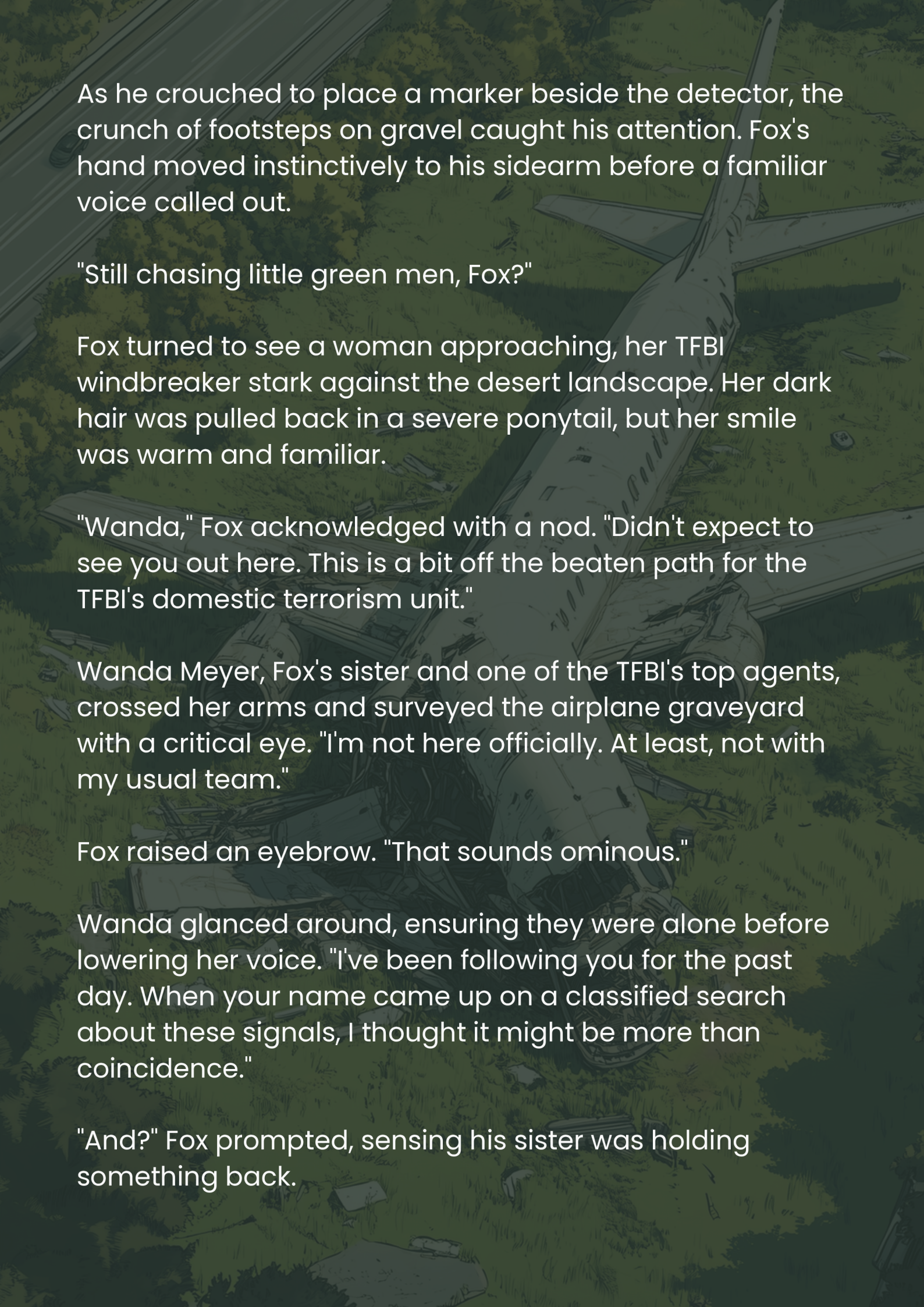
The New Mexico sun beat down mercilessly on Fox Meyer's shoulders as he adjusted the calibration on his signal detector. Heat waves rippled across the vast expanse of the airplane graveyard, creating ghostly mirages among the rusting hulks of abandoned aircraft. Row upon row of decommissioned planes stretched across the desert floor, their metal skins baking in the relentless heat.

"This has to be it," Fox muttered to himself, wiping sweat from his brow.

For three days, Fox had been tracking an unusual electronic signature that TFBI satellites had picked up by accident during routine surveillance. As the Extraterrestrial Liaison for SERPENT, Fox had initially suspected the signal might be of non-terrestrial origin — perhaps a distress beacon from a crashed craft or an attempted communication from beyond Earth. But as he followed the readings deeper into the aircraft boneyard, another possibility began to form in his mind.

His detector chirped suddenly, the pitch rising as he moved between the shadows of two massive Boeing fuselages. Fox checked the readout and frowned. The signal was stronger here, but also more erratic, pulsing in an unsteady rhythm that seemed almost... unstable.

"That can't be good," he whispered, recording the coordinates and signal pattern.

The background is a dark, atmospheric illustration of a desert landscape. In the upper right, the tail and wings of a large commercial airplane are visible, suggesting a crash site. The ground is covered in low-lying desert vegetation and scattered debris. The overall tone is somber and mysterious, with a greenish-grey color palette.

As he crouched to place a marker beside the detector, the crunch of footsteps on gravel caught his attention. Fox's hand moved instinctively to his sidearm before a familiar voice called out.

"Still chasing little green men, Fox?"

Fox turned to see a woman approaching, her TFB I windbreaker stark against the desert landscape. Her dark hair was pulled back in a severe ponytail, but her smile was warm and familiar.

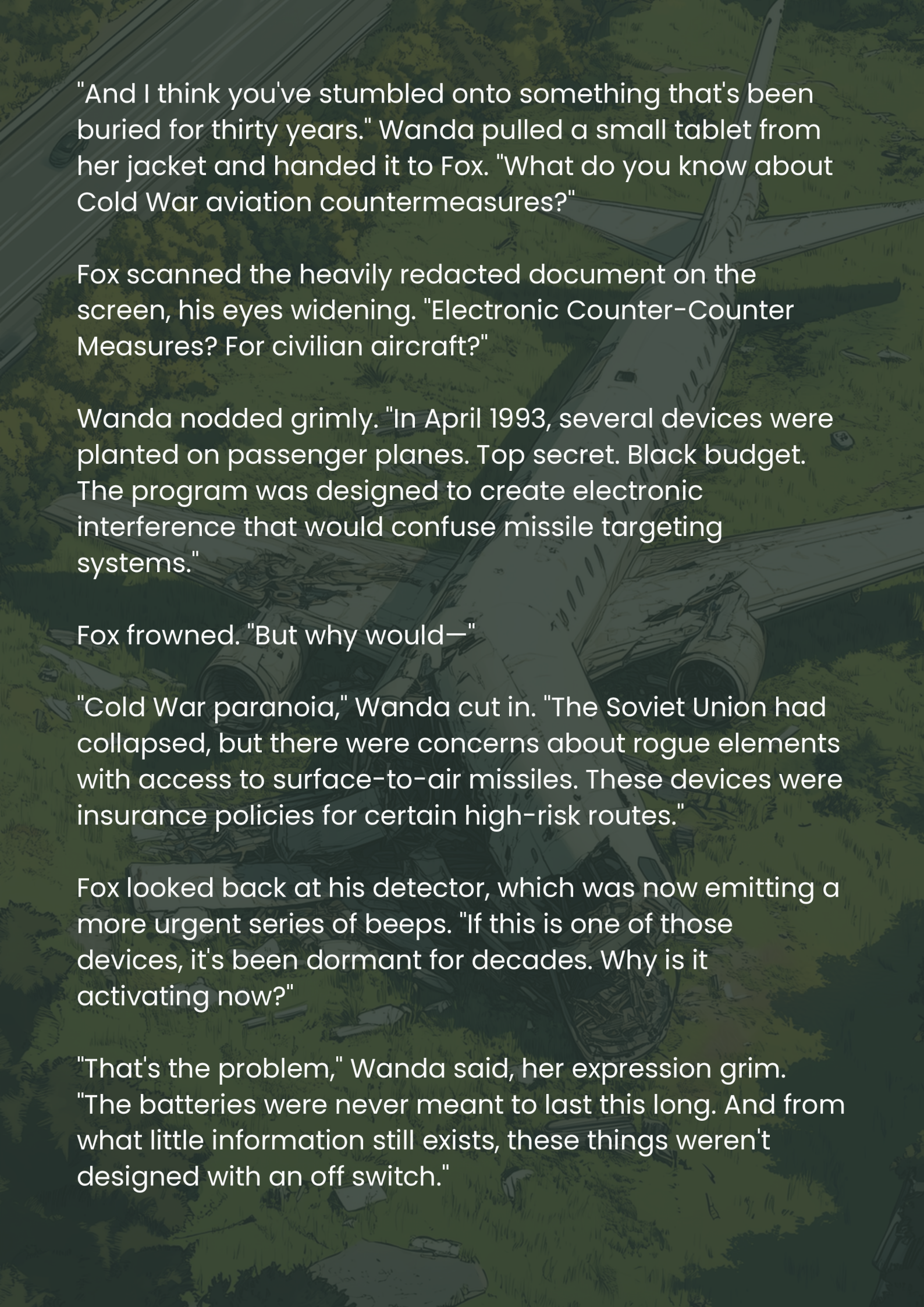
"Wanda," Fox acknowledged with a nod. "Didn't expect to see you out here. This is a bit off the beaten path for the TFB I's domestic terrorism unit."

Wanda Meyer, Fox's sister and one of the TFB I's top agents, crossed her arms and surveyed the airplane graveyard with a critical eye. "I'm not here officially. At least, not with my usual team."

Fox raised an eyebrow. "That sounds ominous."

Wanda glanced around, ensuring they were alone before lowering her voice. "I've been following you for the past day. When your name came up on a classified search about these signals, I thought it might be more than coincidence."

"And?" Fox prompted, sensing his sister was holding something back.



"And I think you've stumbled onto something that's been buried for thirty years." Wanda pulled a small tablet from her jacket and handed it to Fox. "What do you know about Cold War aviation countermeasures?"

Fox scanned the heavily redacted document on the screen, his eyes widening. "Electronic Counter-Counter Measures? For civilian aircraft?"

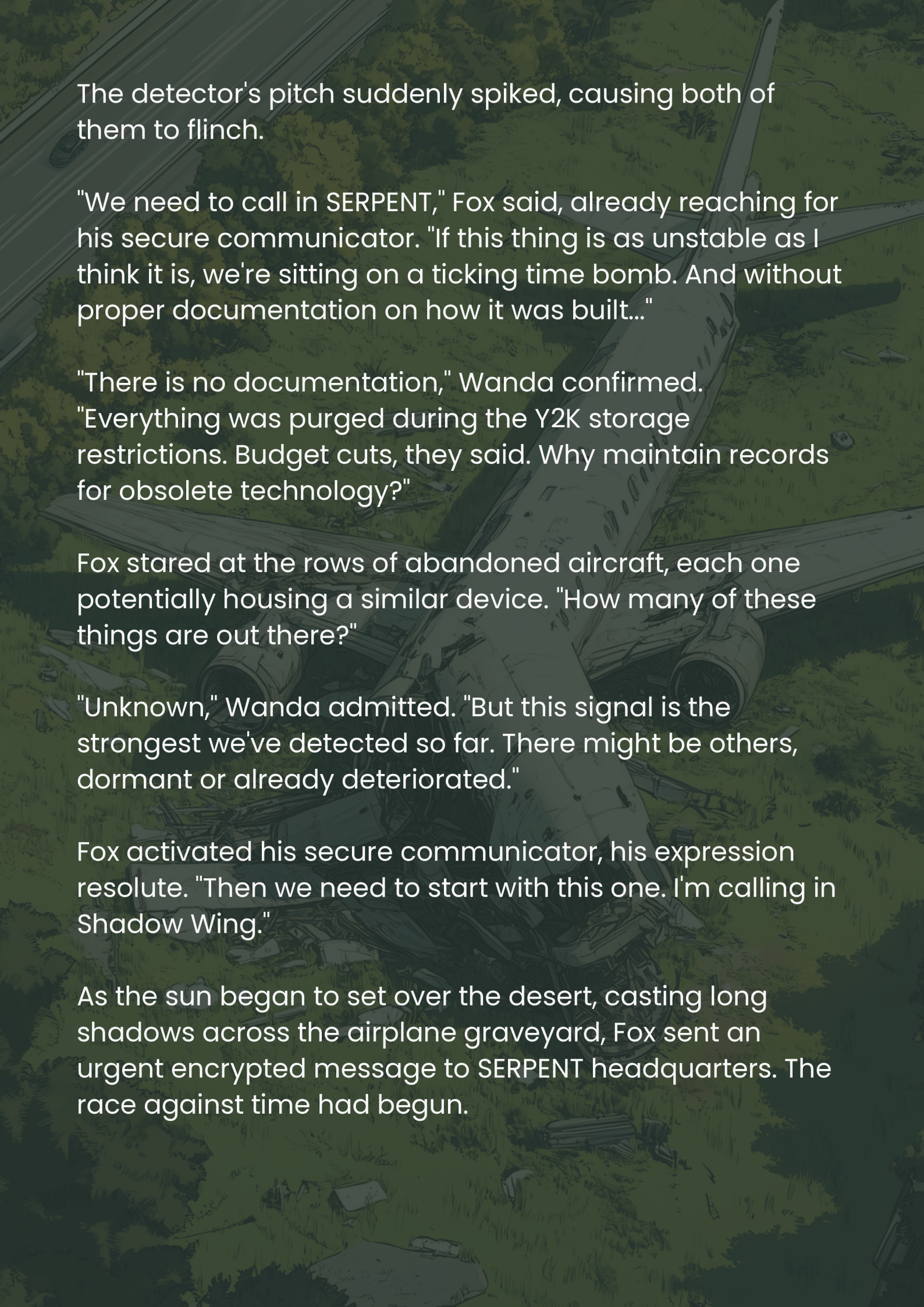
Wanda nodded grimly. "In April 1993, several devices were planted on passenger planes. Top secret. Black budget. The program was designed to create electronic interference that would confuse missile targeting systems."

Fox frowned. "But why would—"

"Cold War paranoia," Wanda cut in. "The Soviet Union had collapsed, but there were concerns about rogue elements with access to surface-to-air missiles. These devices were insurance policies for certain high-risk routes."

Fox looked back at his detector, which was now emitting a more urgent series of beeps. "If this is one of those devices, it's been dormant for decades. Why is it activating now?"

"That's the problem," Wanda said, her expression grim. "The batteries were never meant to last this long. And from what little information still exists, these things weren't designed with an off switch."

An aerial, top-down view of a desert landscape filled with the wreckage of numerous aircraft. The planes are scattered across dry, scrubby terrain, some partially buried in sand or overgrown with sparse vegetation. The perspective is from directly above, looking down on the wreckage. The overall tone is somber and mysterious, with a dark, muted color palette of browns, greys, and dark greens.

The detector's pitch suddenly spiked, causing both of them to flinch.

"We need to call in SERPENT," Fox said, already reaching for his secure communicator. "If this thing is as unstable as I think it is, we're sitting on a ticking time bomb. And without proper documentation on how it was built..."

"There is no documentation," Wanda confirmed. "Everything was purged during the Y2K storage restrictions. Budget cuts, they said. Why maintain records for obsolete technology?"

Fox stared at the rows of abandoned aircraft, each one potentially housing a similar device. "How many of these things are out there?"

"Unknown," Wanda admitted. "But this signal is the strongest we've detected so far. There might be others, dormant or already deteriorated."

Fox activated his secure communicator, his expression resolute. "Then we need to start with this one. I'm calling in Shadow Wing."

As the sun began to set over the desert, casting long shadows across the airplane graveyard, Fox sent an urgent encrypted message to SERPENT headquarters. The race against time had begun.

Chapter 2: The Awakening Signal

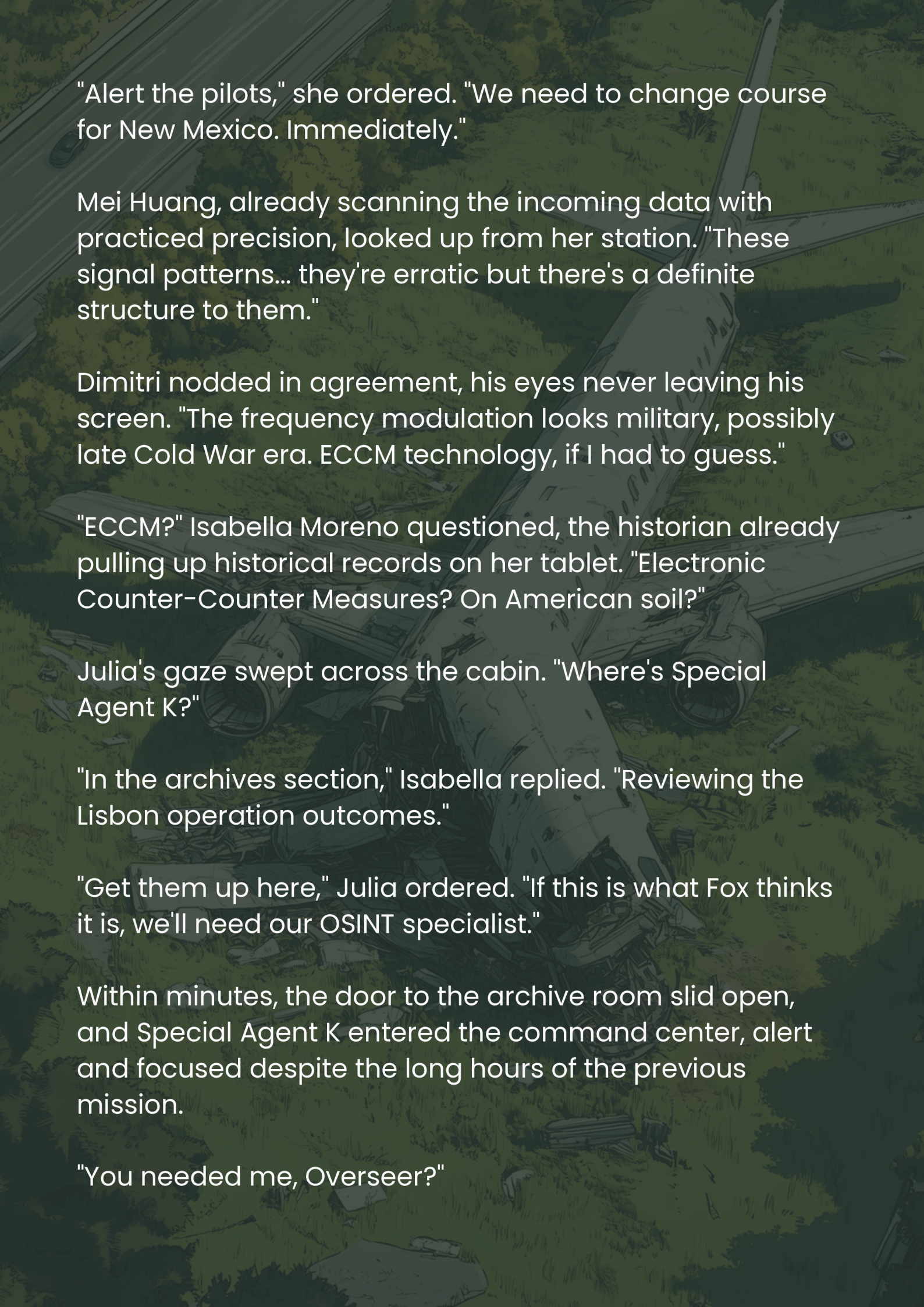
Thirty-five thousand feet above the Atlantic Ocean, the modified Bombardier Global 8000 known as Shadow Wing cut through thin clouds with sleek efficiency. Inside its customized cabin, Julia Sharpe stood at the holographic command table, reviewing the details of their recently completed mission in Lisbon.

"The intelligence transfer was clean," she noted, addressing the analysts seated around the table.

"Portuguese authorities have what they need to dismantle the weapons smuggling operation. Our work there is done."

As the Overseer of SERPENT, Julia had learned to savor these moments of completion. One mission concluded, a brief respite before the next crisis inevitably emerged. She brushed a strand of her auburn hair behind her ear, about to dismiss the team for some well-deserved rest when Dimitri Zechev's voice interrupted from his workstation. "Incoming priority transmission from Fox," the Bulgarian tech specialist announced, his fingers flying across his keyboard. "Encrypted using yesterday's protocol."

Julia nodded. "Put it through to the command table." The holographic display shifted, rendering Fox Meyer's message in three-dimensional text alongside signal readouts and coordinates. As Julia read, her posture straightened, expression growing more severe with each line.



"Alert the pilots," she ordered. "We need to change course for New Mexico. Immediately."

Mei Huang, already scanning the incoming data with practiced precision, looked up from her station. "These signal patterns... they're erratic but there's a definite structure to them."

Dimitri nodded in agreement, his eyes never leaving his screen. "The frequency modulation looks military, possibly late Cold War era. ECCM technology, if I had to guess."

"ECCM?" Isabella Moreno questioned, the historian already pulling up historical records on her tablet. "Electronic Counter-Counter Measures? On American soil?"

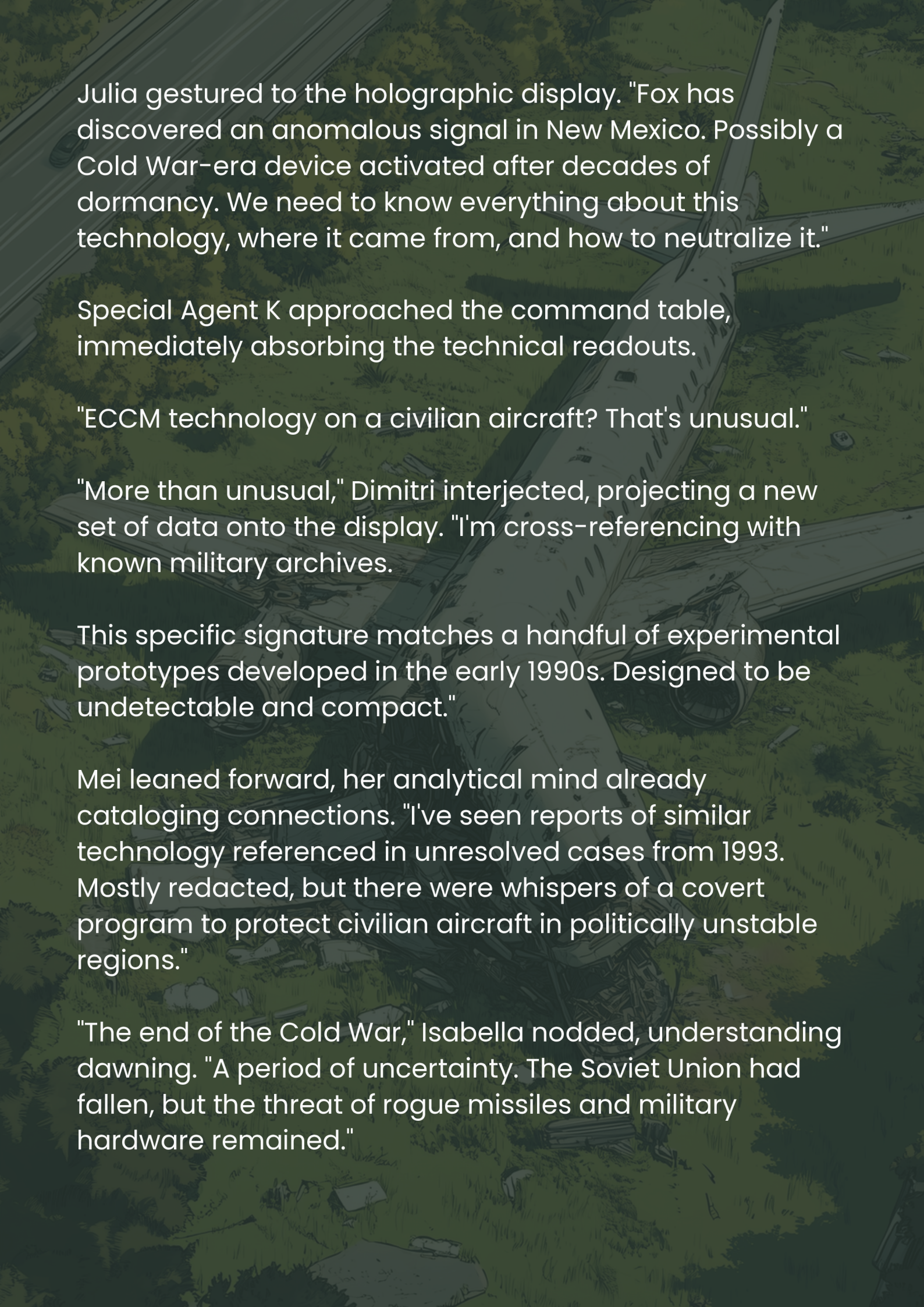
Julia's gaze swept across the cabin. "Where's Special Agent K?"

"In the archives section," Isabella replied. "Reviewing the Lisbon operation outcomes."

"Get them up here," Julia ordered. "If this is what Fox thinks it is, we'll need our OSINT specialist."

Within minutes, the door to the archive room slid open, and Special Agent K entered the command center, alert and focused despite the long hours of the previous mission.

"You needed me, Overseer?"



Julia gestured to the holographic display. "Fox has discovered an anomalous signal in New Mexico. Possibly a Cold War-era device activated after decades of dormancy. We need to know everything about this technology, where it came from, and how to neutralize it."

Special Agent K approached the command table, immediately absorbing the technical readouts.

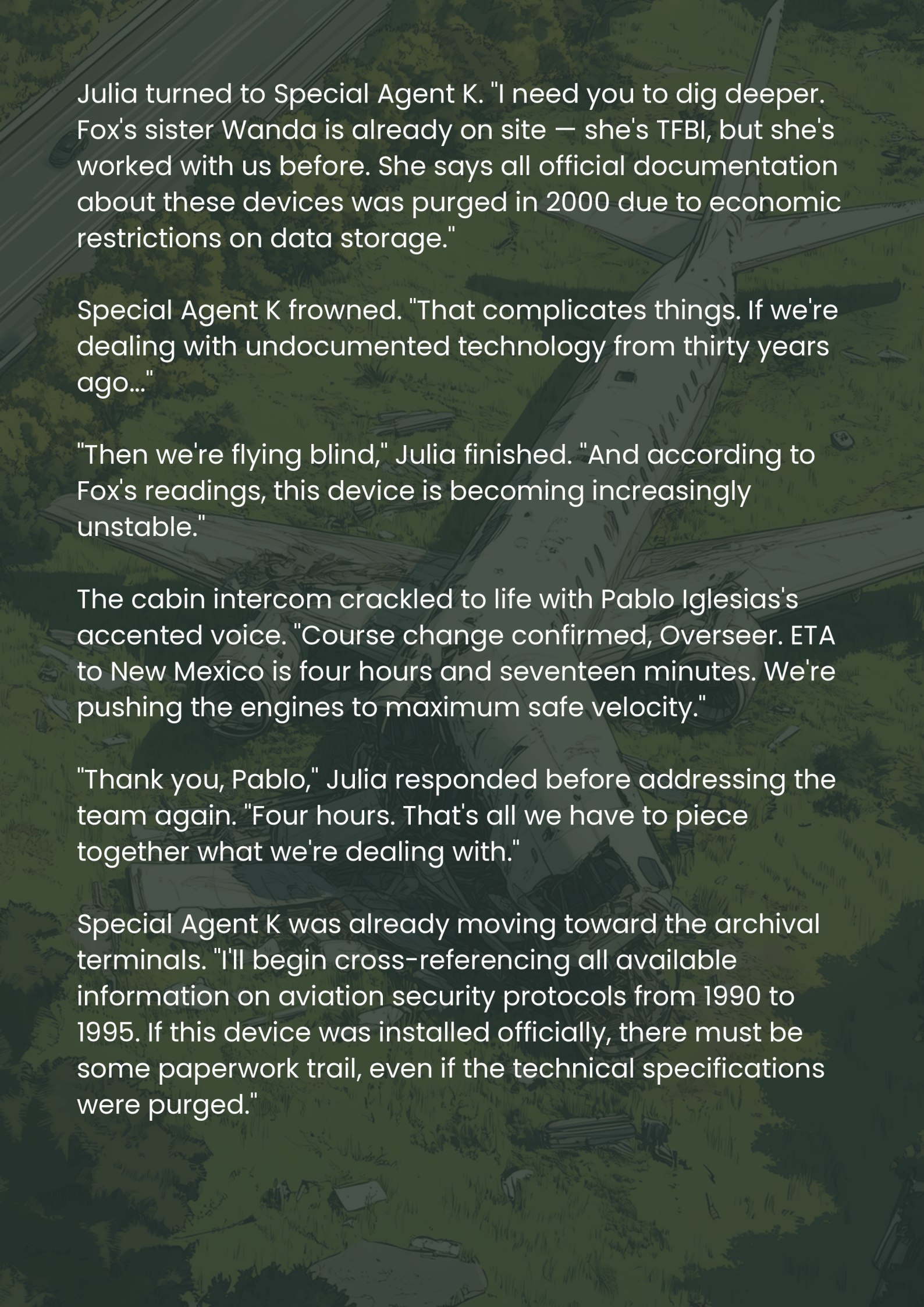
"ECCM technology on a civilian aircraft? That's unusual."

"More than unusual," Dimitri interjected, projecting a new set of data onto the display. "I'm cross-referencing with known military archives."

This specific signature matches a handful of experimental prototypes developed in the early 1990s. Designed to be undetectable and compact."

Mei leaned forward, her analytical mind already cataloging connections. "I've seen reports of similar technology referenced in unresolved cases from 1993. Mostly redacted, but there were whispers of a covert program to protect civilian aircraft in politically unstable regions."

"The end of the Cold War," Isabella nodded, understanding dawning. "A period of uncertainty. The Soviet Union had fallen, but the threat of rogue missiles and military hardware remained."



Julia turned to Special Agent K. "I need you to dig deeper. Fox's sister Wanda is already on site — she's TFBI, but she's worked with us before. She says all official documentation about these devices was purged in 2000 due to economic restrictions on data storage."

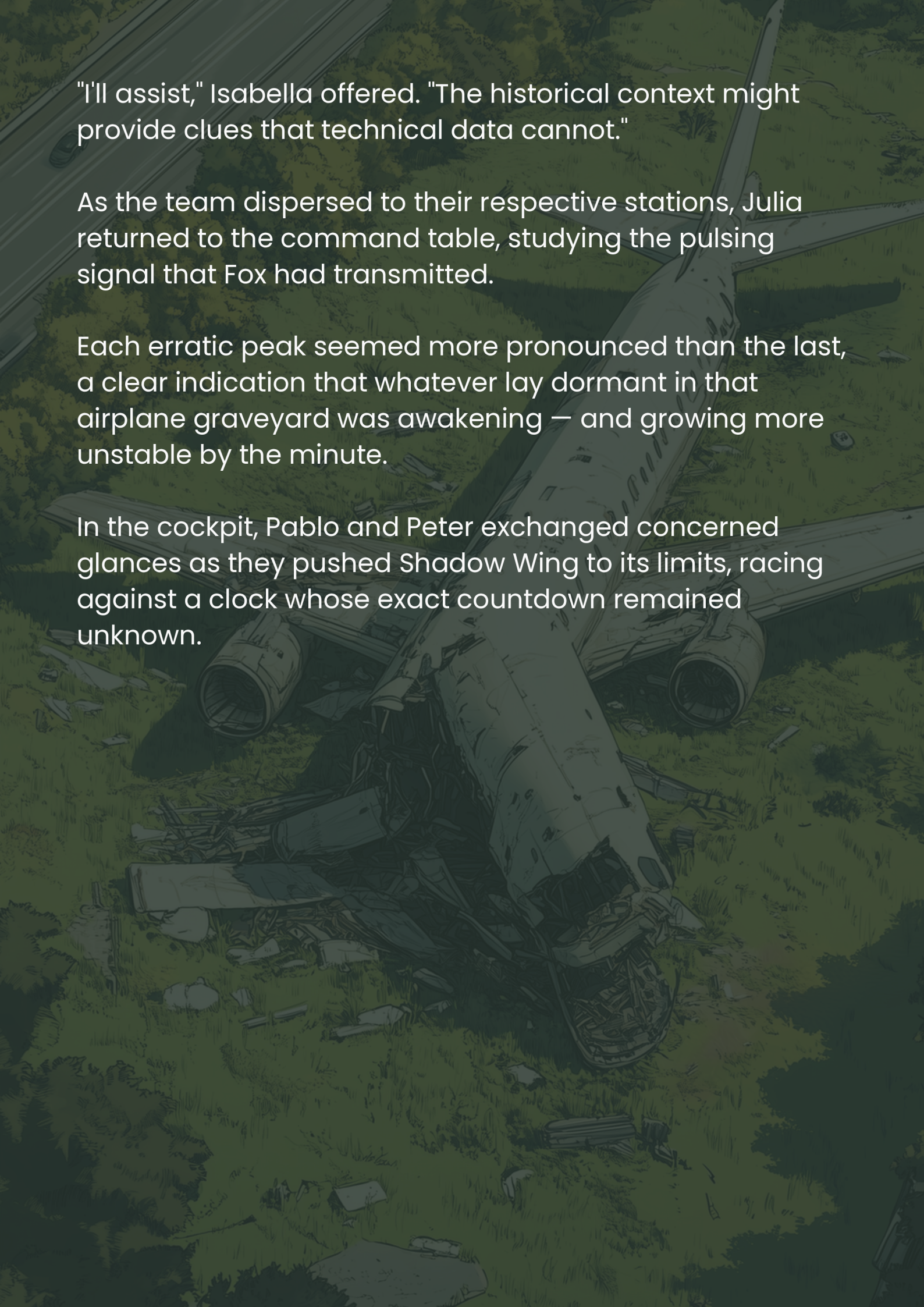
Special Agent K frowned. "That complicates things. If we're dealing with undocumented technology from thirty years ago..."

"Then we're flying blind," Julia finished. "And according to Fox's readings, this device is becoming increasingly unstable."

The cabin intercom crackled to life with Pablo Iglesias's accented voice. "Course change confirmed, Overseer. ETA to New Mexico is four hours and seventeen minutes. We're pushing the engines to maximum safe velocity."

"Thank you, Pablo," Julia responded before addressing the team again. "Four hours. That's all we have to piece together what we're dealing with."

Special Agent K was already moving toward the archival terminals. "I'll begin cross-referencing all available information on aviation security protocols from 1990 to 1995. If this device was installed officially, there must be some paperwork trail, even if the technical specifications were purged."



"I'll assist," Isabella offered. "The historical context might provide clues that technical data cannot."

As the team dispersed to their respective stations, Julia returned to the command table, studying the pulsing signal that Fox had transmitted.

Each erratic peak seemed more pronounced than the last, a clear indication that whatever lay dormant in that airplane graveyard was awakening — and growing more unstable by the minute.

In the cockpit, Pablo and Peter exchanged concerned glances as they pushed Shadow Wing to its limits, racing against a clock whose exact countdown remained unknown.

Chapter 3: Race Against Instability

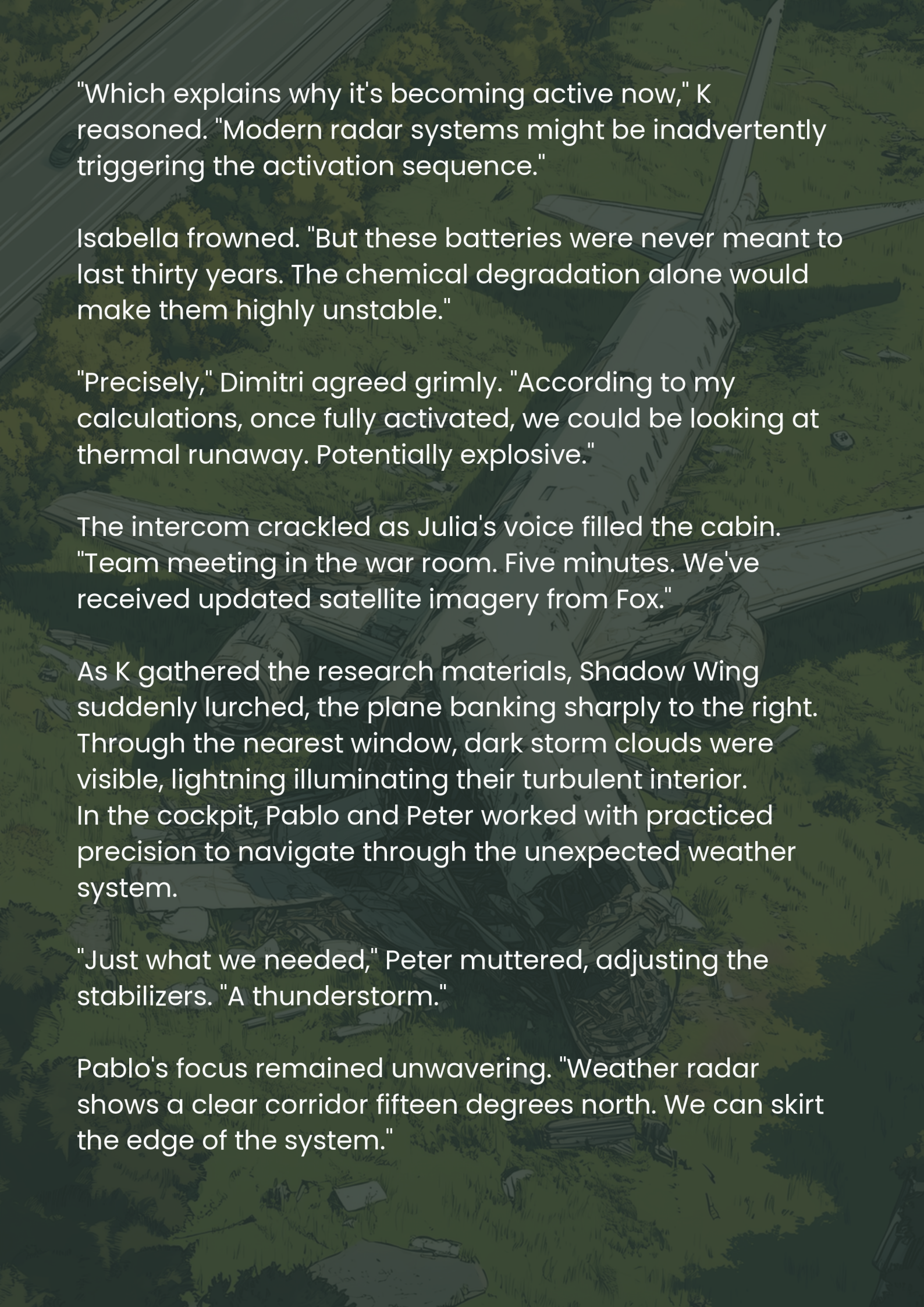
Special Agent K's eyes burned from hours of staring at archival displays, piecing together fragments of information from declassified documents, flight records, and international incident reports from 1993. Isabella Moreno worked alongside, her historian's perspective providing crucial context to the scattered data points. "Here," Isabella said, highlighting a section of text.

"April 1993 marked a period of particular tension in several regions. The dissolution of Yugoslavia was creating uncertainty in Eastern Europe. North Korea was threatening to withdraw from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty."

K nodded, adding these events to the growing timeline displayed on the workstation. "And multiple civilian aircraft had been targeted in the preceding years. Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie was still fresh in everyone's memory." "The perfect storm for justifying a covert protection program," Isabella concluded.

The door to the analysis section slid open as Dimitri entered, carrying a tablet displaying new data. "I've managed to extract more information from Fox's signal readings," he announced.

"The device's power signature suggests lithium-based battery cells, military-grade from that era. They were designed to remain dormant until activated by specific radar frequencies."



"Which explains why it's becoming active now," K reasoned. "Modern radar systems might be inadvertently triggering the activation sequence."

Isabella frowned. "But these batteries were never meant to last thirty years. The chemical degradation alone would make them highly unstable."

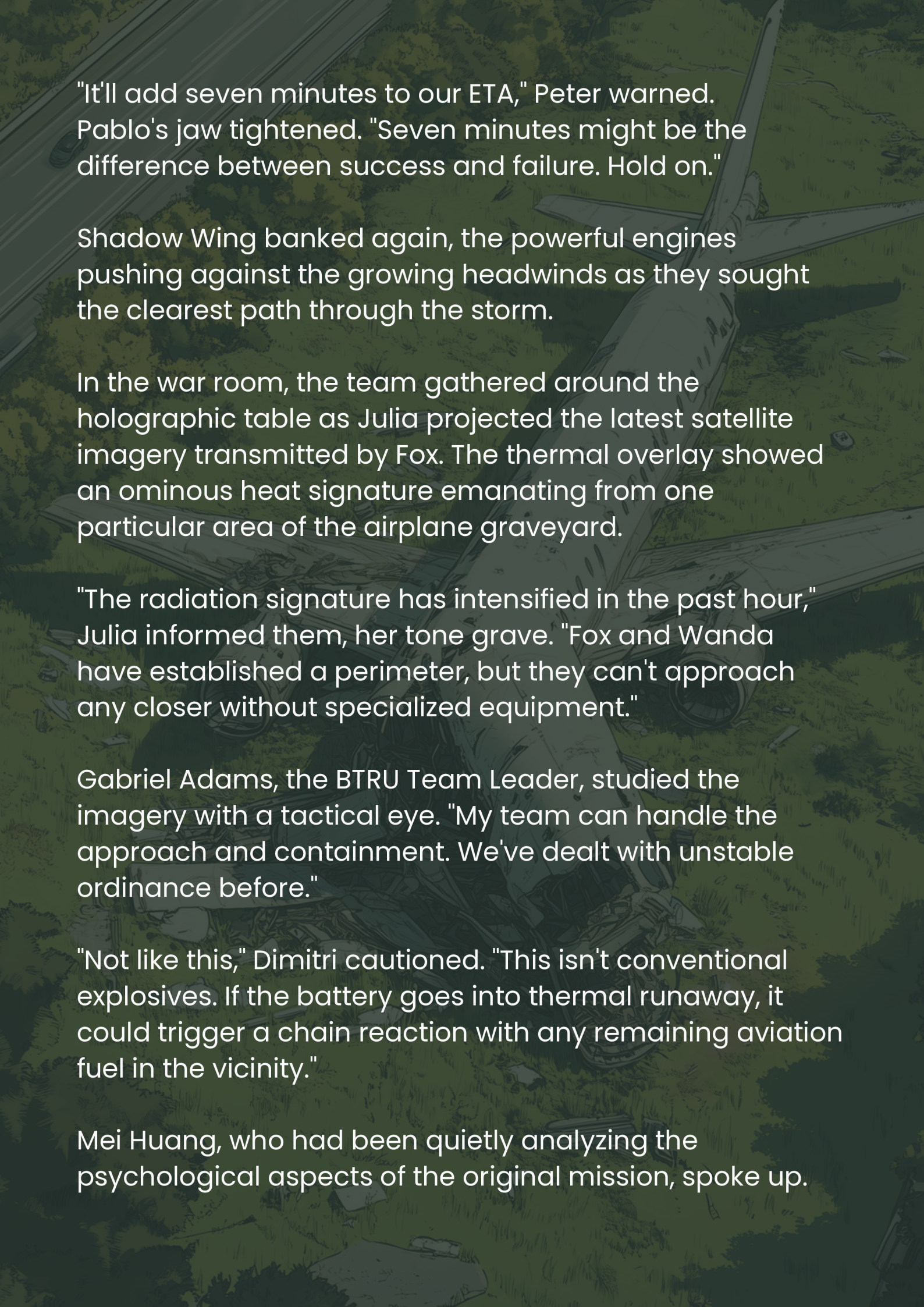
"Precisely," Dimitri agreed grimly. "According to my calculations, once fully activated, we could be looking at thermal runaway. Potentially explosive."

The intercom crackled as Julia's voice filled the cabin. "Team meeting in the war room. Five minutes. We've received updated satellite imagery from Fox."

As K gathered the research materials, Shadow Wing suddenly lurched, the plane banking sharply to the right. Through the nearest window, dark storm clouds were visible, lightning illuminating their turbulent interior. In the cockpit, Pablo and Peter worked with practiced precision to navigate through the unexpected weather system.

"Just what we needed," Peter muttered, adjusting the stabilizers. "A thunderstorm."

Pablo's focus remained unwavering. "Weather radar shows a clear corridor fifteen degrees north. We can skirt the edge of the system."



"It'll add seven minutes to our ETA," Peter warned. Pablo's jaw tightened. "Seven minutes might be the difference between success and failure. Hold on."

Shadow Wing banked again, the powerful engines pushing against the growing headwinds as they sought the clearest path through the storm.

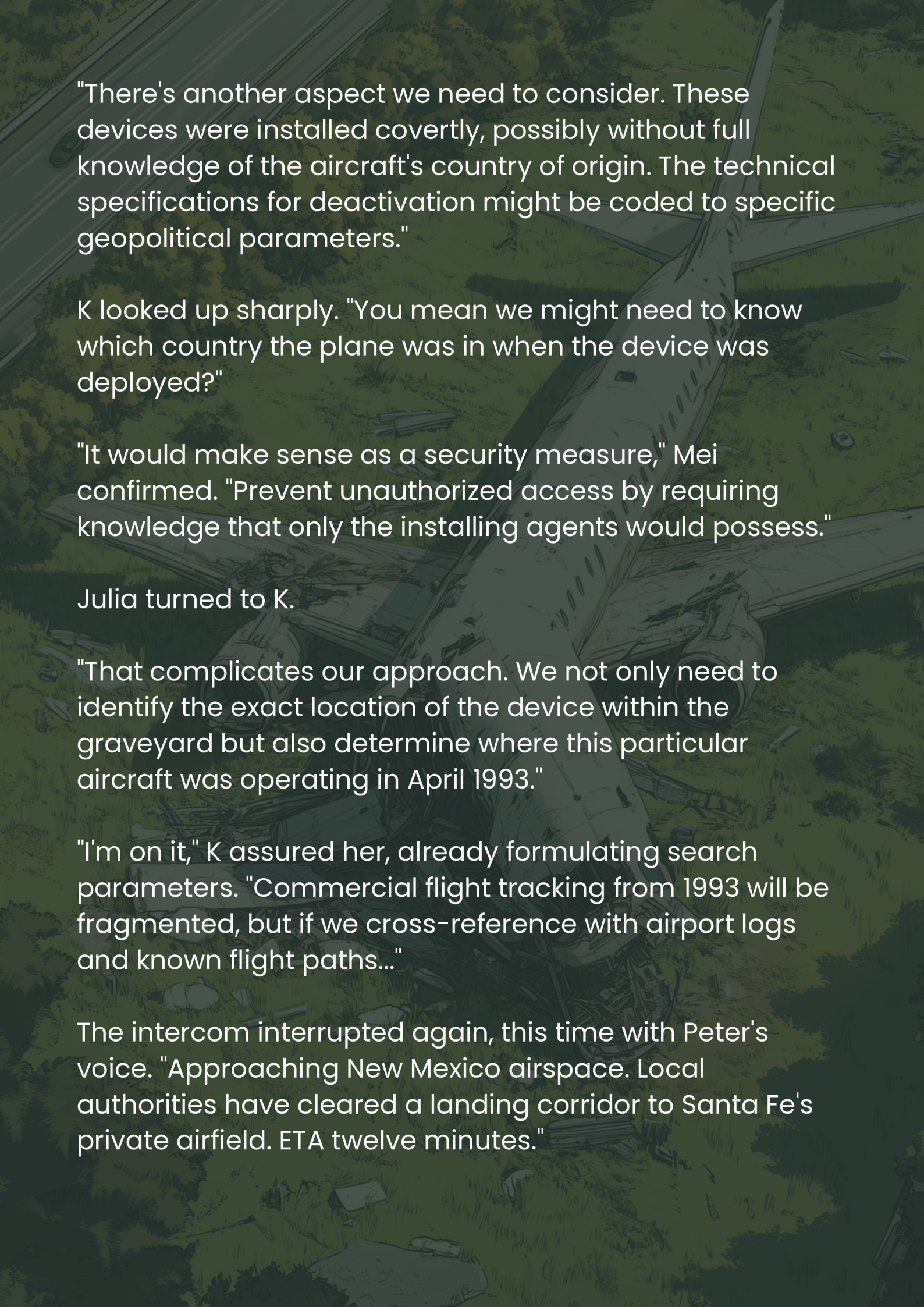
In the war room, the team gathered around the holographic table as Julia projected the latest satellite imagery transmitted by Fox. The thermal overlay showed an ominous heat signature emanating from one particular area of the airplane graveyard.

"The radiation signature has intensified in the past hour," Julia informed them, her tone grave. "Fox and Wanda have established a perimeter, but they can't approach any closer without specialized equipment."

Gabriel Adams, the BTRU Team Leader, studied the imagery with a tactical eye. "My team can handle the approach and containment. We've dealt with unstable ordinance before."

"Not like this," Dimitri cautioned. "This isn't conventional explosives. If the battery goes into thermal runaway, it could trigger a chain reaction with any remaining aviation fuel in the vicinity."

Mei Huang, who had been quietly analyzing the psychological aspects of the original mission, spoke up.



"There's another aspect we need to consider. These devices were installed covertly, possibly without full knowledge of the aircraft's country of origin. The technical specifications for deactivation might be coded to specific geopolitical parameters."

K looked up sharply. "You mean we might need to know which country the plane was in when the device was deployed?"

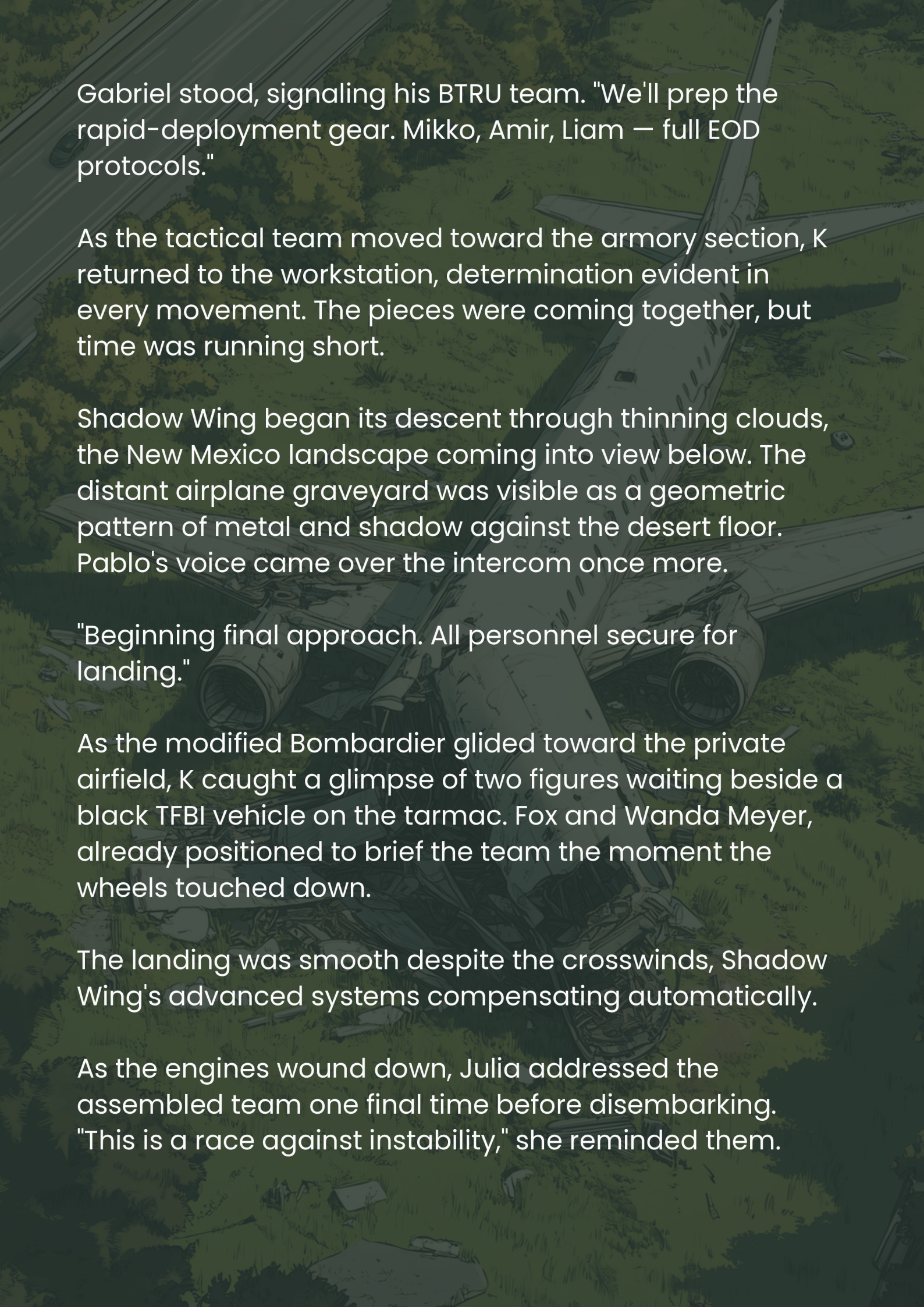
"It would make sense as a security measure," Mei confirmed. "Prevent unauthorized access by requiring knowledge that only the installing agents would possess."

Julia turned to K.

"That complicates our approach. We not only need to identify the exact location of the device within the graveyard but also determine where this particular aircraft was operating in April 1993."

"I'm on it," K assured her, already formulating search parameters. "Commercial flight tracking from 1993 will be fragmented, but if we cross-reference with airport logs and known flight paths..."

The intercom interrupted again, this time with Peter's voice. "Approaching New Mexico airspace. Local authorities have cleared a landing corridor to Santa Fe's private airfield. ETA twelve minutes."



Gabriel stood, signaling his BTRU team. "We'll prep the rapid-deployment gear. Mikko, Amir, Liam — full EOD protocols."

As the tactical team moved toward the armory section, K returned to the workstation, determination evident in every movement. The pieces were coming together, but time was running short.

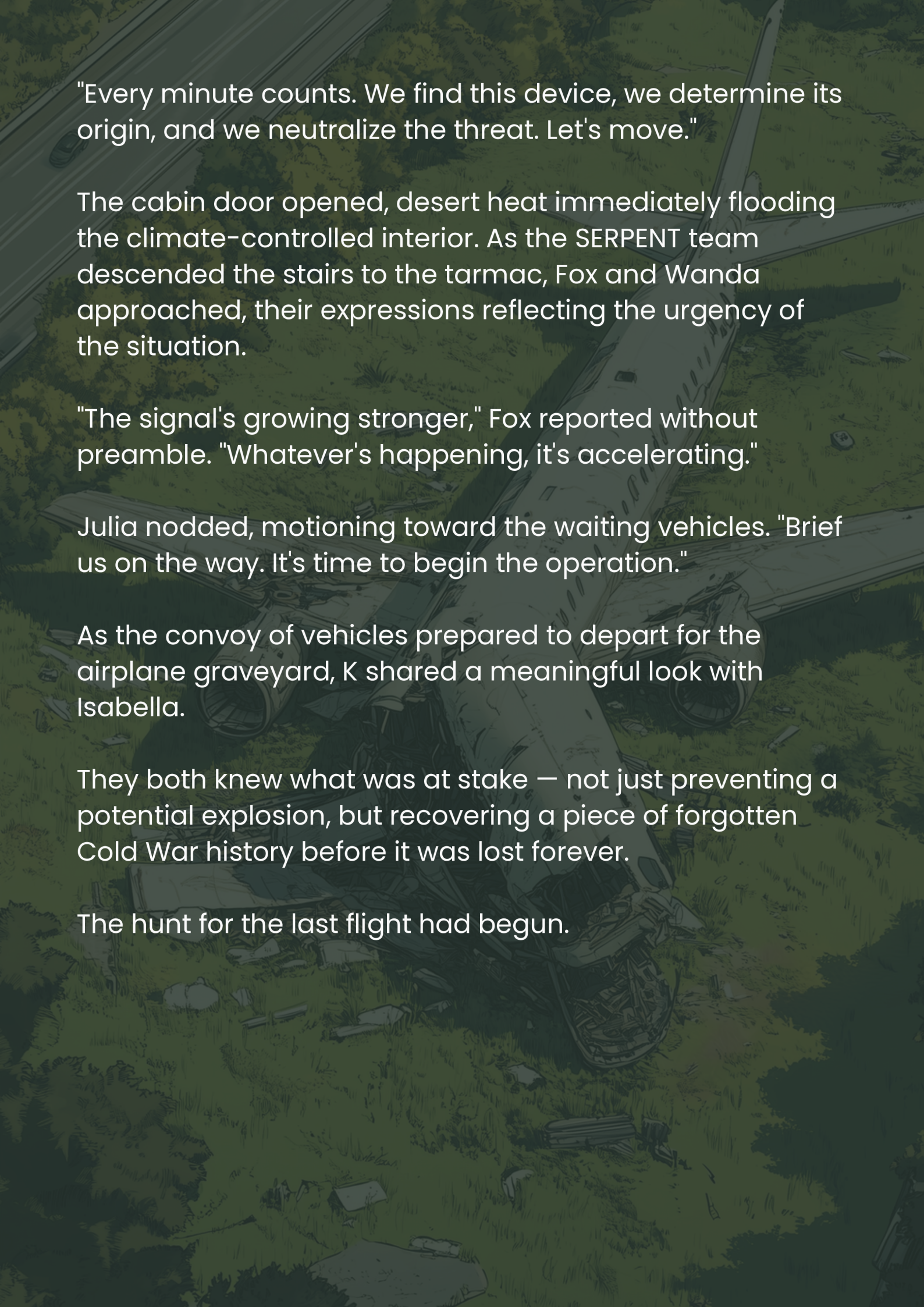
Shadow Wing began its descent through thinning clouds, the New Mexico landscape coming into view below. The distant airplane graveyard was visible as a geometric pattern of metal and shadow against the desert floor. Pablo's voice came over the intercom once more.

"Beginning final approach. All personnel secure for landing."

As the modified Bombardier glided toward the private airfield, K caught a glimpse of two figures waiting beside a black TFBI vehicle on the tarmac. Fox and Wanda Meyer, already positioned to brief the team the moment the wheels touched down.

The landing was smooth despite the crosswinds, Shadow Wing's advanced systems compensating automatically.

As the engines wound down, Julia addressed the assembled team one final time before disembarking. "This is a race against instability," she reminded them.



"Every minute counts. We find this device, we determine its origin, and we neutralize the threat. Let's move."

The cabin door opened, desert heat immediately flooding the climate-controlled interior. As the SERPENT team descended the stairs to the tarmac, Fox and Wanda approached, their expressions reflecting the urgency of the situation.

"The signal's growing stronger," Fox reported without preamble. "Whatever's happening, it's accelerating."

Julia nodded, motioning toward the waiting vehicles. "Brief us on the way. It's time to begin the operation."

As the convoy of vehicles prepared to depart for the airplane graveyard, K shared a meaningful look with Isabella.

They both knew what was at stake — not just preventing a potential explosion, but recovering a piece of forgotten Cold War history before it was lost forever.

The hunt for the last flight had begun.

An aerial, top-down view of a passenger airplane that has crashed in a grassy field. The plane is tilted at a steep angle, with its wings spread out. Debris is scattered around the wreckage. In the upper left corner, a road with a car is visible. The overall tone is dark and somber, with a greenish-grey color palette.

Briefing

Greetings, Special Agent K.

A top-secret electronic device was planted on a passenger plane in April 1993, offering ECCM capabilities to avoid missile and rocket targeting during the Cold War. All information about this device has been destroyed due to economic restrictions on storage in the year 2000. The device could explode at any moment due to battery instability.

The Special Device Service Archive has provided only a photo of the plane, without any exploitable metadata.

Wanda Meyer, Fox sister working with the TFBI, has called for help, and you have been assigned the task of supporting her investigation.

You must find the last known location of the plane. Wanda is waiting for your signal to proceed with the UXO team. Additionally, we need to determine the country where the plane was during the device deployment to retrieve intelligence for defusing the device.

As always, Special Agent K. The Contract is yours, if you choose to accept.

Materials

starting-image-last-flight.png

Answer Instruction

Use the answer to unlock the flagfile, this will reward you with your badge.

Answer Format : country_of_deployment-
icao_code_of_airport-country_of_airport

Answer Sample : belgium-lfou-france

Flagfile

Be advised, the flagfile is an encrypted ZIP. Make sure your OS supports the ZIP format. Ensure the password contains no hidden characters or formatting.

PS: Don't forget to claim your Coins and XP, by posting your card in the [#card-brag](#) channel in Discord.
<https://discord.hacktoria.com>

Write-Up

There is an attached file called a write-up, this will give you the answer in case you get stuck.

Acknowledgements

This challenge was made by Tungst, artwork by Frank Diepmaat.