

Rescue Op.

SAV Kordath Bleu
#13593

AGV Nighthawk
Briefing Room
0630

The Captain rubbed at his own face, sighing as he picked up the cup of caf on the conference table before him. Off to his left in an unlit corner he could sense his Master--former Master, he reminded himself, waiting with her usual patience. She'd been in the room with him through the two previous briefings, watching him dispatch her current Apprentice, Arcean, and Ernordeth to their respective missions. Nath had probably been wondering why Kordath had called her to the briefings in the first place, he'd asked for no input nor told her prior to the dispatches where he was sending people. So far the Captain had been simply delegating jobs, something he normally left to Command Rulvak.

Kordath smiled to himself, he'd been Captain for a few months and everything had been quiet. Almost boring after the past year and a half of conflict that Arcona had been dragged into. Routine on the scouting vessel was maddening to the Ryn. Every day he read the same reports with small changes in them, issued basically the same bloody orders and waited the appropriate amount of time before giving over the reins to Qurroc. The Commander was far more suited to military life than he and it showed, Bleu was often distant and annoyed while on duty yet relaxed and nearly jovial when Rulvak took the Captain's chair.

Glancing at the datapad lying on the table before him the hint of a grin could be seen on the Ryn's face. Finally, after months of tedium and routine, something had happened. He tried to remind himself that people were dying out there, people that Arcona was responsible for. It didn't do much to damper his mood, which was a tad surprising to the Krath. Pondering when he'd gotten used to the fast pace that constant war had set, versus the quiet that fragile peace had brought he sighed. Sipping at his caf he heard the quiet tone of someone requesting entry to the briefing room. With a wave of his hand the door opened as he straightened up in his chair. This was the one talk he'd been putting off all morning.

"Captain," hissed the Barabel, looking at him with slitted eyes. Zakath stood at just over two meters, teeth shining in the light of the holo projector when his mouth opened. The Captain had no honest issue with his Chief of Security but Barabels just made the Ryn twitch. Giant lizards and furry mammals didn't always mix, it was a primal thing.

"Ahem, yes, good morning, Chief."

A black, scaly brow lifted in question, green eyes narrowing in at the Ryn.

“Right, down to business.” Kordath cleared his throat again and picked up the datapad. A few taps on the display later he handed it across the table to Zakath. The Barabel’s eyes drifted across the information quickly before rising back to look at the Ryn.

“The Qauestor is missing? Already?”

“I know, I know! Been on the job less than a month and somebody already went and snatched him up, eh?”

Zakath read the pad again before laying it on the conference table. “This is a mission dispatch, from the Aedile. Also, correct me if I’m wrong, Captain, these orders are *not* for the *Nighthawk*.”

Kordath grinned at the big man, “No, no they are not. They are, in fact, for Celahir’s lot in Soulfire. But funny thing, we picked up the transmission from the *Darkest Night*. Right place, right time I suppose.”

“You’ve sent most of the crew off on errands, Captain. They’re are very few of us capable of backing up Celahir’s strike team.”

“Well now,” spoke the Ryn, still grinning, “I’m not aiming for backin’ ‘em up, Zak.”

“Do not call me that,” growled the Barabel with a slight hiss.

Kordath licked his lips and smiled at the man nervously, he’d allowed himself to fall a bit too far into character there. “Right, sorry mate. Chief. Right. Funny thing, innit? All that’s left is Rulvak, commanding the ship, me, you, and our dear Mistress Voth.”

A green eye flicked towards the corner, Zakath showed no surprise. He’d trained the Irdionian woman, he knew what she was capable of.

“What is your intention, Captain?” The Barabel actually sounded curious.

Bleu jumped to his feet, planting both hands on the table and leaning on them. The grin never left his face, even his tail was swishing about in amusement.

“I’m suggestin’,” said the Ryn, his speech patterns falling into a more familiar tone, “that we get some credit with the new bossman. Uji understands us, yeah? He knows how the *Hawk* operates, he lets us be. Dunno about Kaeth, could be he wants to see us come into port every few bloody weeks to get inspected. Could be he’ll pull half the bleeding crew and replace them with his own people. Why don’t we go and pull his tail out of this fire and see how grateful he can be, eh?”

Zakath let out a sound that Kordath assumed was an exasperated sigh. “You wish to challenge Soulfire on their mission, to gain points with Lord Kaeth? Nath was right, you are a fool.”

From the corner came a rustle of fabric, both men could feel the glare being shot their way.

“He’s come along way, Zakath. I wouldn’t call this the smartest course of action, but I am curious to see how capable we are of doing it.”

“Is this an order, Captain,” growled the Barabel, “or are you asking my opinion?”

Kordath smiled up at the Chief, “Can it nae be both, mate?”

Zakath’s eyes closed and he took on a very pained appearance.

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Planet Jomark, Jospro System

Hutt aligned space

0800

Kordath Bleu was bent over, hands clasping his knees as he spat out the last of the bile and vomit that he’d tossed up after getting off the shuttlecraft. Off to one side Zakath stood shaking his head, Nath standing beside him with an almost amused expression on her face. The Ryn wiped his mouth off with the sleeve of his combat jumpsuit before turning to face his ‘troops’.

“Right, the weapons depot Kaeth was checkin’ on is about two kilometers that way,” Bleu gestured North. “We get over there, we check out what’s about, and we get the bloody Quaestor out, eh?”

“And if we encounter hostiles?”

“Do as you like, work off some of that anger of yours, Chief.”

The glare Zakath sent his way suggested the source of said anger. Kordath ignored it, he was more in his element here on the ground, even if leading others wasn’t a strong point of his. As he started to head north a boney and cold hand grabbed his right arm above the elbow.

“Prisoners?”

“Ours or theirs?”

The grip tightened, causing the Ryn to hiss in pain. He’d almost forgotten how strong his slim Master was. “Are we taking any back with us. For me?”

Kordath turned to look into her black eyes, “For interrogation, right? If we’ve got time. Gettin’ to whoever is behind this is a secondary...thing...objective. Yeah.”

She nodded, and they set off.

Twenty minutes and 1.8 kilometers later

“Well, kark me that’s a whole lotta blokes with guns,” the Ryn muttered, looking through a set of macrobinoculars.

“This was a mistake. We go down there we *will* get killed, or captured. Either way, this is pointless. You should have brought the Talons along.”

“Stow it, Zakath, we can pull this off just fine with the three of us,” snapped the Captain, failing to ignore the barbed comments.

“Mako and his special forces are trained for boarding actions and the like, they would do poorly in this environment.”

“We don’t know that, girl, they’re better suited for this kind of engagement than the Captain is.”

“Oh would you two just stop bickerin’ like an old married couple. What’s the time, Nath?”

Nath lifted a wrist to check her chrono piece, “About 0830.”

Kordath put his macrobinoculars away, clipping them to his belt. He stood relaxed with his arms crossed, tail twitching in a manner that suggested amusement to Nath. She’d learned to read his body language in the time he’d been her responsibility.

“Is there something else you know that you didn’t feel like sharing with us, Kord?”

He turned and smiled at her, “So...figure about a minute to run the distance between us and the depot perimeter, yeah?”

“If you’re taking your time.”

“Gee, thanks Zakath. Anyways, just wait for it.”

“Wait for what, Bleu?” Nath was getting annoyed, which seemed to make the Ryn’s smile grow even larger. Blaster fire rang out from the direction of the depot, causing the Iridonian and Barabel to both crouch in reflex. Kordath’s smile turned into a grin as he crouched and stood a few times, limbering up and stretching.

“Come along, then,” he said, before breaking into a run. His two crew members glanced at one another in exasperation and confusion before following him. The Ryn was making no effort to conceal himself as he

ran, and it became obvious to the others why as they closed in on the weapons depot. Blaster report could still be heard going strong, towards the other end of the small compound anyways.

“Ideal..landing...spot..” huffed the Ryn as his team members caught up with him, “was about...a...kilometer...away, that side...of...the..depot..cripes I’m outta shape.”

Collapsing against the wall of the depot for a moment Bleu gasped for breath, even as he patted his pockets for something.

“So why did you have us circle around to the South, if there was a better spot to the North?”

“Ah!” exclaimed the Ryn, pulling out a pack of cigarettes and taking one. Offering in turn to his fellows who both ignored the kindness, he shrugged, lit one and placed it in his mouth. Taking a long draw he shuddered and sighed, smiling at the big Barabel, “That’d been obvious, eh? Ya see how many guards they had watchin’ the North? Not nearly that many this way. ‘Sides, Soulfire ain’t exactly subtle, now is they?”

“You hoped to coincide our raid with their assault? Kordath, they may well fire on us without cause,” growled Nath, her hand clenching as she watched the relaxing Ryn’s tail move. The Captain stilled it and pulled it back, he recalled the ‘lessons’ his Master had used to get him to focus on his exercises. He still had nightmares about them.

“We’ll be long gone before they get in, yeah? Why ya think I was so quiet on the ride down. Last bit of medi-tation on the comin’ events, eh?” He dropped the cigarette, grounding it out under his heel. “Spent good bit of last night on it as well. He’s in this building,” he paused, patting the wall he was leaning against, “and he’s only got a couple of blokes guardin’ him. Don’t think they know what they got, to be truthful.”

“You believe they captured him on accident?” Zakath seemed disbelieving.

“They’ve been hitting S.C.E.P.T.E.R. joints all over the place, bad luck is all me thinks. Whatever, Uji wants him brought home to organize the counter stuff, offensive, yeah. So let’s get him out and get back to the shuttle, eh?”

“Why not just assist Soulfire?”

“Forget why we came down here, Master?”

Kordath turned to head towards corner of the building and let out a yelp as Nath trod on his tail, turning she seemed to be checking her nails in complete nonchalance. Shaking his head, and trying to ignore the throbbing pain, he got to the edge of the building and peeked around it. The fire fight was in full swing, and no one was paying attention to the actual depot at this point, makeshift and semi permanent fortifications were deployed this side. A road running in from the North lead right into the depot, and

Soulfire had come straight up it. The Ryn had relied on the so-called 'Elite Strike Team' to act with all the arrogance he'd seen from them in the past. His plans had hinged on it, even. Edging around the corner, he and his two crew members made a crouching run to the entrance, ducking inside.

"I sense more than two inside," hissed Nath.

"Well yeah, Kaeth is here as well," muttered the Ryn, opening himself up to the Force anyways and reaching out. "Oh, well. Sithspit."

"At least a dozen inside," snarled Zakath, "you have misjudged indeed."

"Bollocks, some of them is depot personnel, bet. And Kaeth. And a few guards. No big deal, just get in quiet-like."

The Barabel began to open his toothy maw to reply with another thinly veiled bit of sarcasm when both Nath and Bleu held up a hand to still him. Footsteps heralded the arrival of the very surprised looking guard as he rounded a corner, finding himself face to face with an annoyed Zakath. The Security Chief grabbed the soldier up and smacked his head against one of the durasteel walls of the depot, leaving a dent and a pool of blood.

"I can't very well interrogate them if you just kill them, Master," growled Nath. Zakath glared at her, while Kordath stood back and shook his head. All three turned back to the door as another guard exited, this time hurtling backwards before thumping into the opposite wall hard enough to be knocked unconscious.

"Well, that was creative, which one of ya did that?"

A Human standing just shy of six feet in height stepped out of the door, hands at the ready and a glint in his eye. Kordath swallowed and gave a half hearted salute, "Ah, Lord, umm, Lord Kaeth, Sir. We was just comin' in for ya."

"Ah! Bleu? Yes, Captain Bleu! Excellent, do collect that one," Braecen gestured to the knocked out guard. "These fools attacked while I was inspecting the depot, they don't seem to know who I am so I suppose they didn't come for me."

"They say anything about who they are?" asked Nath, checking over the guard before moving out of Zakath's way. The Barabel lifted up the man and slung him over his shoulder.

"Alas, I let them put me in with the rest of the depot workers in case they wanted to do the silly monologuing thing, no such luck today."

“Hate it when they forget that bit,” muttered the Ryn. His own exploits in being captured had become something of a running joke to many in Arcona. If it didn’t almost always turn up useful information he’d feel offended. To the Ryn, the safest place to be during any kind of battle was a cell.

“So, Uji sent you all to come get me, hmm? Fantastic, good on him. I take it your shuttle isn’t far?”

“About two clicks South of here.”

“Why is all the blaster fire coming from the North, then?”

“Umm--”

“Is that where the rest of your crew is, Captain Kordath?”

Kordath stared the Quaestor straight in the eye. This man was his superior, his boss, possibly even his leader if he stuck around longer than the last couple of blokes who’d had the job. It was his duty to show him the same respect and honesty he’d shown Turel and Arcia before him.

“Yes. Yes it is. They’re providin’ a distraction, eh? While we get you out of here, Sir. Lord...the Aedile...bugger it, Uji wants ya back home, Boss.”

“Fantastic, lead on then! Perhaps our new friend here will have things to tell us about why he and his friends thought this was a good idea.”

“They ain’t alone, Sir. Hit the main communications relay and the training base on Klatoonie, too. Got a couple of lads on the comm situation already, gotta go pick them back up then we’re headed to the *Darkest Night*. It oughta be near Klatoonie, figure the *Nighthawk* should lend a hand, eh?”

“Jolly good, Captain Bleu. I’m sure you have more in depth information on board the ship?”

“Wish I did, Sir. Got Nath though.”

“I *will* have some intelligence for you before we reach Lord Uji, My Lord.” Nath had a hungry look in her eyes, one that Kordath was glad wasn’t directed at him this time.

“Great. Let’s get the hells off this rock, people.”