**Find the Traitor**

By: Halcyon Rokir Taldrya - 43

“Grab a seat, Eight.”

Sajon Rounbe nodded at the other man as he strode across the room, taking a seat in the comfortable, but utilitarian-looking chair. There was another man seated beside him, Sajon knowing him only as “One.” Both were Cipher agents, the top intelligence agents in all of Taldryan, yet known only to a select few. Only their Director, the man whose office they were in, knew their true identities. To each other they were only numbers, and to the rest of Taldryan they were ghosts; whispers and rumour to those who would listen to such things.

One had a reputation as the Director’s bulldog, a blunt instrument who did anything to accomplish his mission. If the rumours were true, then the Director was cut from a very similar cloth. Roth Edo, a large Epicanthix, was a man comfortable in his own skin. His own past was shrouded in just as much mystery and innuendo as the rest of the Ciphers, giving cause to the fact that he may have been the very first of them. Regardless, he was a man who was no squeamish in doing what needed to be done.

“We have a traitor in our midst,” Roth stated bluntly, his eyes searching for a reaction from either of them. One’s seemingly permanent scowl deepened and what sounded like a growl emanated from his throat. Sajon allowed only the slightest raise of an eyebrow to show his own surprise. Below his stoic features were another matter entirely.

*They are getting closer. We don’t have much time.*

The voice had become a constant presence in his life since his last mission. He was no longer in control. The voice had taken residence within him, its tendrils reaching into all aspects of his psyche, breaking it down and remaking it into what it chose. Sajon had fought, but the harder he pushed back the more he had broken and splintered.

“You two are the only Ciphers on planet at the moment, and I don’t trust a goddamn other person in this place,” Edo continued. “I need both of you on this. Eight, I know this isn’t your strong suit. I don’t have a target for you to eliminate, but instead to hunt. And One, we need this person alive.”

One grunted in both response and in resignation. Eight glanced quickly at him. This mission was tailor-made for One, but not for him. He was an assassin. His targets were always known. His job was to get in, kill, and get out without anyone knowing. He was the scalpel to One’s anvil.

“Everything we have have has been uploaded to your personal networks. Various identities have been created for your use, should you need them. I need results and I need them now, before this scum hits us again. Dismissed.”

Both Cipher’s rose from their seats wordlessly and went in separate directions. Each Cipher had their own entrance into the Director’s office. While technically known only to them, Eight had long since learned of each entrance, along with a number of others hidden locations around the office itself. It was his job to know the ins-and-outs of his surroundings, friend or enemy alike. Slipping into the shadows and entering his personal tunnel, the hairs on the back of his neck suddenly rose. He stopped himself from instantly spinning around, and instead used his motion to close the door behind him to scan the office one last time. There was only the Director still seated at his desk, hunched over one of the many reports that littered his desk.

Rounbe gave himself a mental shake as he quickly made his way down the tunnel, the path snaking around in random patterns before depositing him into his own personal quarters when on Karufr. He saw the blinking light on his console, moving to take a seat and pulling up the information that he had been sent. The details the Director had on the traitor was both scant, yet more than Sajon preferred. He could connect the dots, knowing personally what each one meant, but doubted anyone else could effectively do so at this point. However there should have been no data points to be had in the first place; not for someone like him. Yet the voice did not have his experience, only his knowledge and know-how. They were sloppy by his standards, which is why it had come to this.

*Kill the Director and flee.*

The voice had spoken, and he obeyed. His true self still screamed under all the layers, but none of it reached anything of importance. His hands went about their working. He had a target. He knew what to do.

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Sanjo made his way carefully down the tunnel, his hands working over the handle of the unfamiliar blaster. His plan was simple and straightforward, as all good plans should be. He had hacked into One’s personal network. His encryption was the weakest of all Ciphers and he had broken it many moons ago. He had sent the Director a curt message asking to meet in his office with new information. The Director had immediately responded and set-up a time.

Now Sanjo crept through One’s tunnel into the Director’s office, holding a blaster that matched what One used often. Sanjo’s contingencies, made because it was who he was, would be the downfall of the Cipher organization. The Director would be dead and his most loyal agent, One, would be the culprit.

Sanjo silently opened the entrance into the Director’s office. There was no room for error. Still hidden within the shadows he saw the Director at his desk in almost the same position he had left him in all those hours before. He brought the blaster up in one smooth motion, never breaking stride as he pulled the trigger. The blaster was a powerful and deadly beast, the red bolts crossing the distance between him and the Director in the blink of an eye. Sanjo’s arm was already coming down, confident he had hit his mark as a green blade of pure energy suddenly appeared in front of the Director, blocking the blasts and sending one back his way.

*NO!*

The voice screamed inside his head as the blaster bolt slammed into his shoulder, sending him careening backwards. He was too shocked to scream in pain. He had caught a glimpse of the man behind the lightsaber that had saved the Director, his green hair unmistakable. He was glad that Halcyon, one of the more powerful Force users in Taldryan, had been there to stop him, yet the professional side of him wanted to know what gave him away.

“TRAITOR!”

Sanjo turned his head to see One on top of him, a fist flying into his face. He could feel the bone break as darkness claimed him, still wondering how he had been found out.