

Reviewing the data that the DIA had assembled on their suspect, Zakath suspected that this would be a relatively easy interrogation. The prisoner was a Human, caught fleeing the hangar just after the successful sabotage of one of their supply ships, and was not Force-sensitive.

In other words, an easy subject to break.

He kept his face carefully expressionless as he stepped into the cell where the prisoner was being held. He could feel the fear billowing off the Human, but despite that, the prisoner was holding an remarkably composed posture, sitting strapped in the interrogation chair, his shackled hands clenched into fists on the arms of the chair.

Zakath sat across from the Human without a word, his gaze on the datapad in his clawed hand, reviewing the subject's data. Tapping to the medical section, he noted that the subject's preliminary toxin screen didn't have any evidence of drug usage or stimulants intended to stiffen his resolve. That made the prisoner's composed state all the more remarkable.

"Name." Zakath finally said, not looking up from the datapad.

"You have my ID. You know who I am," The Human replied calmly, a slight sneer touching his lips.

"I want to hear it from you," Zakath said as he looked up and met the Human's pale blue eyes with his own vividly green reptilian eyes for the first time. "Name."

An annoyed sigh, and then, "Julian Elestan."

Zakath compared that to the notes that the arresting DIA officer made and nodded at the match.

"Occupation?"

"Mechanic."

And so it went as the Barabel began the interrogation as he usually did, by verifying the subject's commonly known data, and slowly peeling away the layers until he finally arrived at the situation in which they were caught, which usually took about an hour or so. Julian's case was not remarkable in that aspect, taking about just under an hour.

"You were arrested by our agentz fleeing the spaceport in a dead run, just after the explosion," Zakath said as he tapped the datapad again, bringing up the officer's report. "Your handz were documented az having reziude from the chemicalz that made up the bomb ized on the sabotaged ship. Can you explain that?"

“Yeah, I’m a mechanic that works on the karking ships. I use all kinds of chemicals.” Julian replied with a surprisingly heated tone. “Just because you secret agents spooks don’t work on ships doesn’t mean you shouldn’t do your blasted homework. Read up on this stuff sometime, why don’t you?”

Zakath had looked up as the Human’s tone picked up and had watched with interest as he spewed out his rant. As Julian continued to rant, Zakath hit a button under the table, the signal to bring in the interrogation droid.

“Human, I waz a bounty hunter before I came into thiz buzinezz,” Zakath replied calmly as he waved a datapad around. “I am cognizant on what chemicalz are commonly uzed for maintenance, having had to buy them, and nowhere waz theze chemicalz ever required.”

“Yeah, well... they’re required now!” Julian shot back, his face taking on a reddish cast as anger touched him.

Interesting.

Before Zakath could respond, the cell door whisked open and a black interrogation droid floated in, its medicine injector already out and primed. Zakath rose from his chair and circled around to the prisoner, slapping a button on the side of the prisoner’s chair. Instantly the chair hummed and straightened out, until the prisoner was stood up and spread eagled.

“Inject him.”

The droid obeyed the Barabel’s command and floated over to the Human. Julian’s eyes followed the slow droid as it came near and tried to squirm from within his restraints to no end.

“The hell are you put- get that droid away from me!”

Zakath merely waited as the medicine was injected into the Human, watching his reactions closely. The serum would take effect in a few minutes, and then the interrogation could proceed with a little more gentle questioning. As the Human’s body relaxed, Zakath judged that the time was right.

“You did quite the job on that ship bombing,” He said with a light tone- as much as he was able to manage anyway. “Waz it your idea, or someone elze?”

“Not... my idea. Was hired to do... it.” Julian’s tone was slurring a bit as he tried to focus on the Barabel. “My method though.”

“It waz very well executed,” Zakath smiled a toothy grin at the Human. “Your employer choze you well. Did you ever lay eyez on them?”

“Nah, was through some droid.”

“Ah, a shame,” Zakath said, and then changed his tack, “Tell me, who supplied the chemicals for the bombing?”

And so it went on, as Zakath began his gentle questioning of the Human, slowly extracting small details from the Human that made up pieces of the puzzle. Slowly, Zakath began to circle back to the topic of the Human’s employer.

“So tell me, friend, who hired you?” Zakath asked softly, his eyes now intent on the Human’s palid face, the Barabel’s mind reaching out.

You want to tell me who hired you.

“I... I...” The Human’s face began to grow red again. “It was a droid who hired me. Some middleman thing. Never saw the actual guy.”

Zakath frowned as the Human seemed to resist. It wasn’t the usual way for subjects to resist when under a truth serum and the power of the Force compelling them.

“Surely you have a name?” Zakath asked, his voice dropping to a hiss.

Give me a name!

“It... it...” The Human’s face was now almost beet-red now. “It was some Muun name!”

GIVE. ME. THE. NAME!

“I... can- ACK!” The Human was suddenly convulsing within his restraints, his eyes now rolled all the way up into his skull.

Zakath slammed the medical alert button. Almost instantly, two medics came into the button and took up positions on either side of the prisoner. The Barabel watched for a moment and then departed, realizing that the interrogation was now effectively over.

Stepping outside of the cell, Zakath fished out a cigar and lit it up, soon inhaling the spicy smoke as he considered the situation. The interrogation had borne some fruit with regard to how the bombing happened, but next to nothing on who was behind it. But at least they now had a very slim lead to follow. Whoever hired the Human was a Muun, and one with considerable resources if they were able to prep the prisoner with an anti-interrogation block.

Zakath sighed and took another drag from his cigar before heading toward his office to prepare for his meeting with the Galeres Summit.

It was a slim lead, but it was a start.