

“Sith-spit how cold is it in here?” Richard Johnson muttered as he walked into the Voidbreaker’s training room. The human rubbed his soldiers and pulled his uniform closer as he walked inside and looked around. In the center of the room stood a bare-chested Trandoshan, dumbly swaying from side to side with his vibrosword strapped to his belt

“Grot!? By the force, Leatherneck, what are you doing!” Johnson shouted, his breath misting as he spoke. The Trandoshan blinked slowly in response, brought out of his stupor by the shout. His movements were slow and sluggish as he stumbled over to Richard. He worked his jaw, trying to work out the numbness in his face.

“Johnson? I... was training,” He answered, struggling for words. The Trandoshan mercenary looked around, suddenly confused, and reached down to draw his vibrosword, “Right. Training. Still have... 30 more minutes...”

“Training? Grot you’re gonna die like this, come on pal.” The weapons officer reached out and grabbed Grot’s arm, trying to drag him out of the freezing cold training room. Grot resisted weakly, pawing at his friend in protest.

“No... Wait, still have to...”

“You ain’t doing nothing till we get you warmed up leatherneck” Richard pulled his friend out into the hallway, dragging him down towards the ship’s cafeteria. Numbly, Grot allowed himself to be led and sat down at one on of the benches. Richard accosted a nearby droid for some hot drinks and blankets, before turning to face the mercenary. The human gave him a long look, before sighing and sitting down next to him.

“Ya wanna tell me what that was all about? Yah nearly froze yourself to death in there,” He asked, letting his concern creep into his voice.

“Temperature training,” Grot answered, frowning slightly, “My people are not... well adjusted to the cold. I thought to become stronger by training in it.”

Richard looked at the Trandoshan incredulously, “Look, Leatherneck, I don’t know if you know this, but, exposure training isn’t gonna fix that.”

“I am aware!” Grot snapped, “I am no fool. I thought that I could learn to ignore it, familiarize myself with its effects. Learn to operate despite them.”

A tense silence passed between the two of them, a pregnant pause as Richard realized the underlying issue here.

“Is this about Nancora?”

“It is difficult to explain to a warm-blood. The cold... it smothers me. It slows me. Robs me of my senses and my skills. Like lead weights dragging me down into the dark. The nights on Nancora were brutal, the desert winds at night like knives...” Grot trailed off, gritting his teeth with a hiss, “It is a weakness. One I will not tolerate.”

Johnson rubbed the back of his neck awkwardly. He was never very good with this heart-to-heart stuff and was exceedingly glad when the droid showed back with coffee and blankets. Taking a long sip of the coffee, he gathered his thoughts.

“Look, pal, I ain’t gonna stop yah,” he frowned, but then chuckled softly, “But if you’re gonna insist on killing yourself, you should probably invite someone to see.”

Grot smiled genuinely up at his friend, a rare sight on the Trandosha mercenary, “You have my thanks. I will do so in the future.” Grot furrowed his eyebrows, “Wait, why were you even down here in the first place?”

Richards deep blue eyes lit up, and with a swift movement, he slapped Grot across the back of the skull.

“Ow!”

“Captain told me to find out who was using up all the power in the training room, and smack em’!”

Grot scowled, growling low under his breath as his friend erupted into laughter.