

Zsoldos – Jasper Spaceport

Wild Space

37 ABY

“Thirty seconds to landing, we are docking at landing pad 34-C” the pilot’s voice cracked over the shuttle’s intercom system.

The interior of the old Lambda-class shuttle reeked of stale alcohol, sweat, and other obnoxious smells normally associated with non-humans. Adding to the smell, the cabin was completely full, creating a rather cramped environment for the passengers and causing Dracaryis to have no choice but to stand during the rather bumpy landing sequence.

“So much for a comfortable retirement.” the former Fist of the Brotherhood quipped to nobody in particular.

The ancient shuttle creaked and bounced as it approached the landing pad. The pilot was clearly coming in a bit fast, most likely to speed up the process of landing and opening the shuttle. The smell really was getting to everyone on board. After a few seconds, the shuttle gave an almighty lurch and came to rest on the pad at Jasper Spaceport, located in the oldest settlement on the planet Zsoldos.

The shuttle ramp dropped, and fresh air flooded the interior of the cabin. Slowly the passengers grabbed their belongings and began to exit down the ramp. Dracaryis grabbed his bag containing his new identification papers, armor, lightsabers, and a blaster he had taken from the Dark Council’s armory on Arx. Pulling his hood up over his head, Dracaryis stepped off the shuttle and onto the pad.

“Papers out and ready!” barked the Jasper Spaceport customs official. Dracaryis stopped. This would be the first test of his new identity. Before leaving Arx, he had enlisted the aid of the Justicar, Voice, and Herald to help craft a new identity to allow him freedom of maneuver in Brotherhood space. Dracaryis had no shortage of enemies after his long tenure as commander of the Iron Throne’s military forces, and it would make retirement difficult if he had to kill everyone that realized who he was. Dracaryis moved forward in the queue, his identification papers in hand. On request, he handed them to the customs agent.

“Name?”

“Amak. Kalan Amak. New Tython refugee.” Dracaryis chuckled at the irony of his new backstory. Marick might appear to have the personality of dry toast, but he did have a sense of humor.

“What is your business on Zsoldos?”

“Oh, you know. Seek my fortune, drink as much as I can, maybe even pick a fight or two.”

The customs agent’s eyes narrowed. “Another bounty hunter, huh? We’ve had enough of a problem with all these bounty hunters that have started flowing in. I’ve seen people from all over the galaxy showing up here looking for fortune and glory. Just keep the fighting to the bars. New management isn’t too keen on random brawls in the streets.”

“New management?” Dracaryis asked.

“Yeah. Some Mandalorian by the name of Roark. Declan Roark. Came here not long ago with a load of Mandos and bounty hunters and set up shop in Yuanming over on the island of Du Kang. Bringing in all types. Bringing in a lot of credits, too. Great for business here.”

Declan Roark. Dracaryis knew the name. He and his new clan was the reason Drac had left Arx and traveled to the edge of Wild Space. Vizsla had a sort of allure to it, and after spending so long leading the armies of the Dark Council, Drac was keen to see what a life of credits and solo adventure would be like. He knew Roark and Clan Vizsla were on Zsoldos, but now he knew exactly where to find them.

“This all seems to be in order,” the customs agent said, handing Dracaryis his forged papers back.

Dracaryis took the papers, stuffed them into his bag, and stepped off the pad and into the streets, in search of passage to Du Kang.

Zsoldos – Yuanming, Island of Du Kang

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Dracaryis leaned out of the speeder to catch a glimpse at the island of Du Kang. For such a small island it held what appeared to be a vast city, with buildings reaching above the cloud line.

It looks like they crammed Coruscant and the jungles of Dagobah onto a single island, Dracaryis thought.

The island’s buildings appeared to form concentric circles, each inner circle reaching slightly higher than the one outside it. In the center, a large, extravagant building stood higher than any point on the island. Landing pads jutted out at regular intervals up the massive building’s side. A vast jungle enclosed the entire cityscape’s outer ring, with white sand beaches connecting it to the sea.

The speeder driver tapped Dracaryis and pointed at the building. “That’s Yuanming, the Heart of Du Kang. It’s a giant hotel, and only the rich and famous are allowed access. The richer and more famous you are, the higher up in the hotel you get to stay. The top levels are restricted. Only certain people get to go there, by invitation of Declan Roark himself.”

“Then that’s where we are heading” Dracaryis said.

“It’s your funeral, friend” the driver said. “But I’ll warn you now. Roark and his crew aren’t fond of people dropping in uninvited.” And with that, he pulled the speeder to the right and headed for one of the uppermost platforms. Within seconds, the driver touched down on the upper tier of landing pads and Dracaryis hopped out. He transferred a large sum of credits to the driver, grabbed his bag, and walked towards the entrance to the enormous hotel, stopping only to read a large sign posted at the entrance to the platform.

WELCOME TO YUANMING

ALL WEAPONS ARE PROHIBITED PAST THIS POINT

CHECK ALL BLASTERS, BLADES, AND LIGHTSABERS WITH THE GUARD

REMOVE ALL HELMETS AND HOODS

PRESENT IDENTIFICATION AT THE FRONT DESK

Dracaryis checked his bag and removed his identification. He then stepped over the threshold and found himself in an ornately decorated lobby framed by floor to ceiling carved wood walls. Around the lobby were various chairs, booths, and tables where mercenaries and bounty hunters sat drinking or smoking, engaged in quiet but intense conversation. Dracaryis approached what appeared to be the concierge desk, and presented his falsified identification papers again.

“Welcome to Yuanming...Mr. Amak” the concierge said with a suspicious look on his face. “We have been expecting you.”

Dracaryis was slightly taken aback. “Expecting me? How do you even know who I am?”

The concierge held up Dracaryis forged ID as though comparing it to the real man standing before him.

“We like to keep a close eye on all new arrivals to Zsoldos. Especially former members of the Dark Council who pass through customs using fake identification papers.”

And without warning, four guards appeared out of nowhere and flanked Dracaryis.

“Declan Roark is expecting you. If you will please follow me” the concierge said cordially.

Dracaryis nodded. Even with his knowledge of the Force, he was unarmed and surrounded by guards and about fifty mercenaries all in various stages of drunk. Even he, one of the most reckless and bold commanders of the Dark Council’s military forces knew when he was outnumbered. He turned, and followed the concierge to the lift in the center of the lobby, flanked by his new security detail.

Dracaryis stepped into the lift.

“Declan will meet you at the top. I recommend that you do not disappoint him.”

And with that, the lift doors closed. Dracaryis took a deep breath, steeling himself in preparation for his unexpected meeting with the leader of Clan Vizsla.

So. Declan Roark knows I’m here. And he knows who I am. This will either end very well, or very poorly.