

Blue = DarkHawk
Black = Sanguinius

Orian System
Aeotheran
Seng Karash

Prologue

Sitrep:

DarkHawk had already imbedded himself well behind Collective lines earlier in the night. After a successful first stage, the HSD task forces crippled the Collective's communications and defense arrays both on the surface and in orbit. The ground assault had begun and the Quaestor was looking for his first kill of the night.

That personal thrill the Shaevalian may have experienced from the act, would abruptly come to a screaming halt. Saturating the Quaestor with even more hate and resentment.

DarkHawk watched as his two targets moved closer towards his camouflaged perch. The low level guards were the only thing that stood between DarkHawk and the backside of the governor's quarters. The two guards walked aimlessly boasting on personal bravado and drunken stupors.

Just before the assassin initiated his attack, the comlink in his helm cracked.

"DarkHawk...DarkHawk, this is the Taron, do you copy?" a voice whispered urgently.

Nothing

"DH, this is Ty do you copy?" Ty said imperatively.

"Tytus O'Baieron, DarkHawk's good friend and pilot extraordinaire, desperately tried to reach his comrade through the Decimator's communications system.

Still nothing

"Takagari you contumacious man-child, answer the bloody comms!" Ty said almost elegantly.

"*Damn!*" DarkHawk thought to himself.

The two guards continued to walk pass the Quaestor's hidden perch. The heavy pit in his stomach, DarkHawk knew this kill was abandoned.

deeper into the darkness of the night, DarkHawk maneuvered away from his targets without so much as a sound. Double checking the area he replied back to the Duros' earlier hails.

"Ty, what the hell, I was about to breach the governor's place." he growled into his helm's comlink.

"Well change of plans princess, you have new orders you need to return to the ship so I can get you to your new LZ," the Duros replied.

"Wait, what? On whose orders:" asked DarkHawk.

"Master Sang's..."

DarkHawk's mind wandered for a moment. *"Something big must be up for Master Sang to call me off this..."* DarkHawk said to himself.

"Copy...enroute back to your location,"

"What your ETA, time is of the essence" replied Ty.

"ETA six mic..." Darkhawk stated.

"Copy that, ship is prepped for takeoff..." Ty said.

DarkHawk returned to the Taron undetected, finding Tytus waiting on him in the flight deck.

"I am glad to see you made it back in one piece, I would have been devastated had anything happened to you Sir..." Ty said with his sarcastic entitled voice.

DarkHawk shook his head in discuss. "Sometimes I regret saving you Ty"

"Then who would you have fly you around to all these exotic places and quite frankly Sir, save your hide..."

"I hate you..." DarkHawk said through gritted teeth

"Take us to Master Sang, clown shoes"

The Duros chuckled a bit before pushing the throttles forward on the Decimator. The ION engines spooled up and thrust the vessel in to the night.

“What are the coordinates for our rendezvous point with Master Sang,” asked DarkHawk

“South Beach on Lor Zatean” Ty replied.

“What does he have in store for us you think? Asked DarkHawk

“Hopefully a hot shower and the penthouse suite Sir...” Ty said without hesitation.

The Decimator pierced the night sky as it raced towards its destination. DarkHawk watched the waves of the Menaris Ocean as Ty maneuvered the Taron about eight meters above the water. Flying low under the radar is almost second nature to Ty, even if HSD had shut down all ground radar. A force of habit, one that had saved the Duros’s life more times than he could remember. A large plume of water followed the VT-49 as Ty pushed the throttles all the way to the top of the throttle quadrant.

Ty brought the Decimator around the north side of the island and followed the beach line to its southernmost shore. There as they broke hard left, parallel with the sinuous beach line, a lone Imperial Gozanti-class Cruiser, the Star Protector. A cloaked figure stood along the shore and watched the Decimator land beside the cruiser. The crew ramp engaged and both DarkHawk and Tytus disembarked and made their way towards one Augur Sanguinius Entar, Master to Battlelord Takagari “DarkHawk” KogaRyu.

The Shaevalian and the Duros walked with purpose as they approached the Augur. DarkHawk dropped to one knee and rested his arm on his bended knee. Ty put one hand behind his back, the other over his chest and slowly bowed.

“Master, I am at your service...”

“Rise DarkHawk, we have much to discuss” said the Augur.

“I would not have pulled you from your assignment DarkHawk, had it not been important.”

“I...” DarkHawk began to speak.

The Augur quickly cut his apprentice off before he could speak any further.

“There no time for propriety Takagari, as I said, there is much to discuss....”

Time was fleeting for one such as the Augur, he had seen much in his time within the Brotherhood, and waiting for his apprentice to arrive was just another chore he had to go through in order to achieve his goals.

Sanguinius gestured again for DarkHawk to rise, "It is wrong for a Quaestor to bow to one of their House, no matter our association."

"I know, master" the Shaevalian replied, "But I care little for such traditions when my respect for you is more important."

The Entar smiled warmly and helped the Quaestor up off his knee and embraced him. "My pride for you is my one weakness." Sanguinius released his student and patted him on the back. "Come, follow me. Information has come to light that has changed the situation somewhat."

DarkHawk followed the Augur as he walked off, Tytus remained nearby, his loyalty to Takagari was as evident as his master's to Sanguinius.

Orian System

Aeotheran

Pandamonium

The nightclub was usually a gaudy, noisy and riotous affair, yet it was silent as Raoul Ladon studied the three beings standing before him. The human had been assigned to the Orian System by his superiors in Capital Enterprises. He was nominally in charge of The Collective's operation on Aeotheran, yet the Liberation Front always tried to take front and centre every chance they got. The Twi'lek representative from the Liberation Front, Fira Borla, was one of those standing before him, making excuses as to why they had relocated to the resort.

Yoir Wrisq, a Rodian, was Fira's lieutenant. The pair were demanding the opportunity to increase defences across the island, as they were concerned about the Brotherhood after the affair with the Severian Principate. They believed the Brotherhood would take the opportunity to strike back at the Orian System, formerly the home of one of their Clans, to take revenge for the Collective's actions in the Lyra System.

Mohjak Todka, the representative for The Technocratic Guild, stood silently as the others made their argument. The Nikto wasn't much one for words. Instead it felt to Raoul that his silence judged the others.

"... should increase security around the magline to Seng Karash and institute a no fly zone over the island."

Raoul's attention snapped back to Fira, as she made her case. "The cost alone to defend the resort is more than the amount allotted to us this quarter."

"Our cause is worth more than mere currency, Raoul." Fira spat in response, her outrage evident.

Ladon tutted under his breath at the Twi'lek, the fanatics were all the same, too focused on their hatred for the Jedi and their ignominious cousins, the Sith, to see the big picture.

"Our cause is a just one, Fira, but it does not excuse us from fiscal responsibility. We cannot add to the tax burdens of our newly freed dependents."

"Newly freed? We have controlled this system for the past 12 months," Fira argued, "We have seen our numbers soar from the recruitment across the system against the tyranny of the Jedi."

"And that has made our costs increase." Raoul finished. "That aside, I will allow you to increase security around the rail terminals and institute a no fly zone around this island for the next two months."

Borla was clearly pleased with his response, as her lekku twitched accordingly. Mohjak, the Technocratic Guild liaison interjected, "We have undertaken scans of the island and the bedrock is still fairly secure from when it was created."

"And?" Raoul prompted.

"There should be no risk of infiltration from below or the ocean, our scanners would detect such a thing."

"Excellent," Raoul replied. "While vigilance is always rewarded, initiative should also be rewarded."

The others agreed with the human.

Those words were the last to be spoken by Raoul, before a bolt of plasma arched through the air and impaled the human, burning through his torso and killing him instantly.

Cries of alarm erupted from the trio, as Collective troops situated within the nightclub reacted to the situation. Soldiers filed in, their guns up, seeking a target.

DarkHawk retreated back into the shadows, his objective completed. Information had come to light that the Collective had relocated their leadership on Aeotheran to Pandamonium, and Sanguinius had used his connections and knowledge about the resort to get the Quaestor close enough to take out his target. Now, DarkHawk just had to get out of there.

“Time to LZ is 21 seconds, DH.” Tytus’ voice came over the commlink placed in DarkHawk’s ear.

“Copy,” DarkHawk replied as he hurtled through a window and clambered up over the roof of the nearby building.

Rain was pouring down heavily outside, providing cloud cover for the VT-49 piloted by Tytus as it flew in towards the island.

Alarms blared as the Collective responded to the intrusion, their radar tracking the Decimator. A squadron of X-Wings swung in from the west, the opposite direction to the Taron.

“This is Blue Squadron, Taron.” the Flight Leader’s voice came over the commlink, “Approaching target and providing air cover.”

“Affirmative”, replied Tytus as he maneuvered the Decimator to hover over the roof of the building that DarkHawk was located on.

The wind howled around the Battlelord, catching his robes as he leapt for the distended ramp of the Taron. He grasped the ramp and pulled himself up, “I’m aboard, Ty. Let’s get out of here.”

“You’ve got it, old man.” Tytus joked as he turned the ship to a new vector. The T-70 X-Wings flew over the Decimator, their quad lasers lighting up defensive positions across the island.

The Duros powered up the engine and was pushed back into his seat from the acceleration. DarkHawk made his way up to the cockpit from the depths of the ship, chucking his satchel onto the co-pilot seat..

“Where to now, DH?” Ty enquired as he acknowledged the appearance of his boss.

“Seng Karash” DarkHawk replied, “Master Sanguinius awaits me there.”

The Battlelord smiled wryly as he imagined the adventure before him and glanced over at his satchel, containing the artifact identified by his master. “And I don’t want to disappoint him or our Overlord.”