

HUNTING THE MIND HUNTER

Fiction

By

Battlelord Takagari "DarkHawk" KogaRyu #264

Snapshots

<[Darkhawk's Snapshot](#)>

<[Ty's Snapshot](#)>

VT49 DECIMATOR

Tārōn

ARX SYSTEM

The Decimator came out of its lightspeed jump, appearing from the depths of space. Ty pulled the throttles back and verified the tactical jamming system was engaged. DarkHawk watched his good friend monitoring the system, and the Duros caught him looking.

"Better we make it harder for us to be identified, at least that part of this mission will be rather uncomplicated," Ty said in his elegant sarcastic enunciation.

"What..." replied DarkHawk.

"Well, Sir, let me dumb it down for the Shaevalian ogre," Ty said in a yet more demeaning regal tone. "Smooth as a baby's raw back-side," Ty said as he waved his arm out in front of him.

"You don't even do it, right dude!!! It's ASS! Smooth as a baby's ASS!" DarkHawk exclaimed.

Tytus laughed hysterically. DarkHawk shook his head in discontent. "A little pre-mission humor, Sir? Miss Sparks is quite the target to go after. Plus, you know she will have a few of those Hive Mind Marines chasing her coat-tails. Nasty buggas they are indeed..." the Duros said.

"Yeah, Ty, this got thick and quick. Sparks will surely have those Marines on board. I will have to watch for them and maybe try to take them at range and then move in on them. They will be most troublesome." Darkhawk said, rubbing his chin.

The intel report Summit intercepted, have the Collective agent using the VIP quarters as her makeshift command center. No real stealthy way to get in there other than a straight forward assault. That will end up being a quick one way trip to one's demise. According to the schematics, the VIP quarters have a balcony overlooking the northwest quadrant of the platform. If one could get to those maintenance levels and drop in on to that balcony. That would be a feat in and of itself. Just getting to those maintenance levels would be an arduous task.

DarkHawk shrugged those thoughts off and recognized the supply ships coming into view on the main screen. Ty coordinated before leaving the ISD *Perdition*, the nav plan for the incoming supply ships to the Shadow Academy platform. Ty was maneuvering underneath the last supply ship of the convoy and clearing the Decimator away from any of its ion engines jet wash. Ty positioned the Decimator a mere meter away from the supply ship's belly. He was matching the *Tārōn's* speed with the big freighter.

"Why are we doing this again?" DarkHawk asked.

"Sir, do you honestly believe that this blacked-out Decimator, not to mention with you aboard, is not going to draw her attention?" Ty replied harshly.

"It would not be abnormal, Ty..." DarkHawk replied.

"Nor is it normal for such a high-level Collective agent to be aboard the Academy either, sir," Ty said in a disparaging tone.

"Come in under the radar gives us the advantage, if she does not see us coming, makes your appearance that much more of a surprise. Think, man!" Ty said, tapping his finger to the side of his temple.

Ty continued to monitor the ship's instrument panel while continuing to closely mimick the freighter's speed as she came closer to the Shadow Academy Platform. As the convoy slowed to almost a stall, Ty targeted the airlock on the belly of the freighter. Moving the Decimator in very meticulously, Ty inched his way closer to the airlock. The Duros flipped a sequence of buttons, and then the airlock gauge illuminated green. The echo of the two ships conjoining echoed through the Decimator.

"OK sir, your up," Ty told his comrade

Darkhawk went to the small crew ladder behind the Decimator's flight deck and climbed up until he could see the latch for the airlock. Pausing for a second, he yelled out to Ty, "You sure about this...?" asked the Battlelord.

"Yes, you big sissy la-la! Quit wasting time and get your ASS in gear and get in there!" Ty said over his shoulder.

DarkHawk looked back up at the flashing green airlock light, "*Screw it...*" he said to himself. Turning the latch, a purge of air expelled as the latched dropped down. Now the Equite could see the frosty under-belly of the freighter. Praying the freighter's hatch was not hardened from the inside, DarkHawk grabbed the second airlock's latch and depressed it. The spring-loaded latch popped out and, without hesitating, DarkHawk turned the handle. Another purge of air was expelled, and the Battlelord pushed the airlock open. Continuing up the ladder another rung DarkHawk, carefully peeked his head into the freighter hold to see if the coast was clear. Then he pulled himself the rest of the way up through the hatch.

Ty had left his seat on the flight deck and came around to the crew ladder to close the Decimator hatch. Both Sadowans gave a silent nod towards each other, as they both closed the hatches simultaneously.

Now, stowed away aboard the freighter, DarkHawk figured this airlock was as good of a place as any to hide until the freighter started unloading its cargo. Ty went back to the flight deck and disengaged the Decimator from the airlock system and broke away slowly from the freighter. Ty was instructed to hold back until DarkHawk was embedded into the station. Then, Ty would release the Viper Probot into the station as a decoy while he sets up and picks off targets from afar.

Supply Freighter

Shadow Academy Platform

The supply freighter moved slowly as it came into the loading bay, DarkHawk could hear movement around him and eagerly awaited any unwanted visitors in his small hold. After about twenty minutes of mass movement, things went a bit silent. Activating his comlink, DarkHawk radioed back to Ty. "Moving out..." the Equite whispered.

Above him was another small hatch. DarkHawk unlocked the hatch and ever so slightly began to open it. Keeping his eyes peeled to the hatch's opening, DarkHawk surveyed the scene, ensuring no wandering eyes would see him. Taking in a deep breath and steadying himself, the assassin reached out to the Force and enabled his ghosting ability, vanishing from sight. Carefully maneuvering through the freighter, DarkHawk maintained his connection to the Force. A translucent shimmer, unseen to most untrained eyes, moved ever so fluidly through the ship's corridors and out into the Academy's hangar bay.

The hangar was filled with stacks of supply crates, and mech droids were carting them off to their designated holding location. For the moment, no sign of personnel. The droids paid no attention to the shimmering anomaly strategically moving about the hangar. Moving up to the second level of the hangar and traversing the catwalks, the exit was just a few meters away. Suddenly a feeling resonated through the Equite, a wave of firing impulses rushing from head to toe. The Equite readied himself, the door wisped open, two maintenance personnel walked in, eyes glued to their datapads. They turned to their immediate left and paid no attention to their surroundings. "*Lemmings...*" DarkHawk thought to himself.

Moving slightly faster now, the wraith slipped out the exit door, before it closed automatically. Finding himself in one of the adjacent corridors of the main hall of the platform now, DarkHawk acknowledged the fact that more traffic would indeed be encountered. With his back up against the corridor wall, the Equite hugged the corridor's structural curvature. Moving undetected past a set of security cameras. Another two meters, then the first intersection, turn left, four meters, up to the maintenance corridors. Approaching that first corridor is where it all went to hell.

Concentrating heavily on his ghosting ability, put the precognition at a disadvantage, and not recognizing the two armed guards sooner, rather than later. DarkHawk slammed right into the first guard as he transitioned from one side of the corridor to the other. The collision disrupted his train of thought, and the assassin materialized out of thin air. Making a quick recomposure, DarkHawk went on the attack. The first guard caught a palm heel to the jaw, followed by the left uppercut to the solar plexus. As the guard buckled and expelled self-sustaining air, DarkHawk maintained a firm hold on his victim. The second assailant came in with a right hook barreling down on the Battlelord. This time the precognition recognized the incoming danger.

DarkHawk pulled the first guard in close to him, simultaneously twisting his hips slightly, taking the guard off balance. The right hook crashed against the guard's ear, both men screamed from the pain. Continuing his assault, DarkHawk executed a quick spin-heel kick and put his left bootheel at the base of the first guard's skull. The force behind the blow caused the guard's face to slam against the corridor floor. Side-stepping out of the way of a sloppily executed front kick, DarkHawk hooked the leg and, with the aid of the Force, slung the man violently against the wall.

The man slumped to the floor like a blood-soaked rag filled with meat. That small commotion surely caught someone else's attention. Getting the guards out of sight had to be a priority, and the trash chute was the best option. Opening the trash door, the Equite stuffed the two men one by one and activated the system. The door shut, and DarkHawk could hear them careening against the trash chute. Footsteps now could be heard coming down the corridor, without hesitating DarkHawk broke into a sprint down his targeted route. The helm's HUD had the route highlighted, and the Equite followed it to the tee.

Making the turn at the corridor, four meters was an easy trek, low and behold the maintenance ladder. Quickly navigating the ladder and popping open the hatch, he managed to pull his legs up and get the latch somewhat shut, just as the other guards raced by. *"No rest for the wicked..."* DarkHawk thought as he tipped up to his feet. The maintenance tunnels were always a bit dingier and smelt like stale grease.

The course now was somewhat dull, here is where Sparks would post random patrols. The problem the Equite faced now was which patrols would be posted. The Hive Mind Marines or random Collective patrols. Either way, fast and hard would have to be the game plan. No sense even engaging the Hive Marines without using the saber. If it ends up being random patrols, well, that is just how the scheme of totality works.

The comlink popped as Ty's voice came in through the comlink. "In position, VP is on board and will be streaming video to us both."

"Thanks, Ty, I am in the maintenance tunnels, making my way to the service ladder." DarkHawk replied.

"Any inconveniences?" Ty asked.

DarkHawk paused for a moment. "Yes... two-person patrol. But they are taking out the trash at the moment."

"That is unfortunate. Patrols have increased, and they are definitely looking. Stay vigilant," Ty said almost fatherly.

"Copy, watch you six," DarkHawk replied.

"Trust me, sir, I am secure..." Ty said as he focused in on a Collective patrol through his BlasTech E-11s Blaster Sniper Riflescope.

With the Viper Probot on patrol, VP could make standard patrols without too much attention. Probots were typical for patrols, and he would have to stay on course to not draw any unnecessary attention to him. Video feeds were beginning to transmit in, and through the

helm's HUD, DarkHawk could see the patrols searching. It would not be long until they figured out he was in the maintenance passages.

Sparing no time, the Battlelord unsheathed the Nightsister bow and moved further down the tunnel. Before the first intersection, the Equite felt the presence of three others. Then the whispers could be heard. They were close, coming directly at the Battlelord. Just ahead, the HUD picked up the movement. Three guards, moving in unison, random patrol.

"Well, this has got to be their unlucky day," DarkHawk said to himself.

The guards already having their weapons at the ready, could not imagine what was about to go down. Their eyes widened as the illumination of the plasma arrow brightened up an already dimly lit corridor. The first arrow released from the bow and DarkHawk broke into a quick run. The men watched in horror as the arrow took their partner off his feet. The arrow found its mark, splitting the forehead of the guard, with a meaty thud. The locked expression of terror remained on his face.

DarkHawk continued his charge, bearing down on them quickly. The first guard managed to get a shot off but was wide right. Before the second round left the blaster, the guard felt the Battlelord grasp the barrel. Coming in low and close before rising from below the sentry's guard. His shoulder forced the rifle further up as his fingers wrapped around his target's wrist. DarkHawk immediately twisted. Putting his back towards the target while pivoting the guard's arm. He felt the tension rise before pushing up even further while pulling the arm downward, locking the elbow against his shoulder.

The resulting snap was as satisfying as it was expected.

The guard roared in pain, although that scream and the guard's life would be short-lived. The Talon gloves came to life as the retractable claws sprung open to strike. The screams turned to gurgles as DarkHawk shredded the man's throat. The lifeless body slumped to the cold floor of the corridor, blood pooled around the guard.

DarkHawk crouched to his knees and spun towards the last guard. He was firing aimlessly as the wraith came in for the kill. Now facing the guard, DarkHawk made two quick slashes with the claws. Tearing the flesh from the guard's thighs, the cuts were bone-deep. Blood poured freely from the wounds, as the man began to slump forward, DarkHawk spun around behind the man. Unsheathing a knife from its holster, DarkHawk drove the blade hilt deep just behind the left ear. The medulla oblongata was penetrated by the nine in knife, and the man slumped to a quick and silent demise.

"Zo zyemus mirtis kash iv its savas vik'dyt ..." <*A good death is of its own honor...*>, DarkHawk said aloud in the ancient Sith tongue.

The assassin found the nearby ladder he was searching for. He looked over his shoulder and surveyed the carnage he had just caused. He was relishing in the accomplishment. *"Not over yet..."* he thought to himself.

Upper Maintenance Levels

Overlooking VIP Balcony

DarkHawk looked down upon the VIP balcony, from his perch, the outside catwalks of the upper-level maintenance corridors. A comfortable fifty foot drop on to the red and white tiled balcony floor. Poised and ready, DarkHawk waited for the opening. The comlink squawked, "We have a slight problem," Ty's voice whispered.

"And that is...?"

"She is spooked, they must be on to us. We got a squad of armed escorts up here with her. Not to mention, if I read that lunatic Twi'lek lips correctly, this place is going to be swimming with those repulsive Hive Mind Marines," Ty said through a whispered growl.

"Well, it's now, or never I guess. You got the shot or no?" DarkHawk asked?

"Please, are you truly that archaic to even ask me that. Of course, I have the shot!" Ty exclaimed.

"Downward and onward it is then," DarkHawk said enthusiastically.

DarkHawk jumped without hesitation, the balcony speeding towards him. About four meters away from the balcony, the Equite connected with the Force, then pushed down hard with his arms. Performing a Force push, the tendrils of the Force reaching out, slowing his rate of descent. The Equite dropped on the marble without minimal shock to the body.

One of the armed men attempted to scream "Balcony," but was abruptly cut short by one of the Battlelord's throwing knives sinking into the center of his exposed neck. The blade nearly pieced entirely through the fleshy target. The next closest guard was railed backward as the blaster bolt from Ty's sniper rifle exploded his head. Instantly, another guard's head exploded, sending blood and brains splattering against the white walls.

DarkHawk raced in releasing more deadly projectiles, the knives sunk deep into its intended target. Before reaching the next guard, one of the crimson blades of DarkHawk's double-bladed saber ignited, and Darkhawk began to race toward the guard. Cutting the blaster in half with an upstroke strike, DarkHawk quickly side-stepped and grabbed the tactical vest by the nape of the neck. Kicking the legs out from under the guard and yanking back on the vest, DarkHawk spun the saber around and drove it through the man's chest. The smell of cauterized flesh filled the room.

The Twi'lek target, one Gwendolyn "Sparks," was being covered by her three remaining goons. DarkHawk dove away from the barrage of blaster fire bearing down on him. The Twi'lek laughed genuinely as the mayhem around her ensued. She pulled two frag grenades from a henchman's tactical vest, removed the pins, and tossed them in the vicinity of the black-clad assailant.

With the aid of the Force, DarkHawk reached out towards the incoming frags. Feeling the Force flowing through him, a quick wave of his outstretched arm and the telekinetic tendrils took ahold of the frags and redirected them out past the balcony. The Equite felt the reverb of the explosion as he took cover. As the Twi'lek and her crew made their way towards the door, the blaster fire from her and her men continued.

DarkHawk reached into a pouch from his belt and pulled out a smoke grenade. Yanking the pin and tossing it over his shoulder in the general direction of the exit. White smoke immediately began to engulf the room. Now with shurikens in hand, DarkHawk went on the attack. Rolling out from behind his cover, DarkHawk launched the shurikens in a sidearm motion. Thrown with such velocity, the deadly projectiles cut through the air with a distinct buzzing sound. Until the distinct meaty thud of their stop as they penetrated two of the gunmen's skulls. They dropped violently as if someone took their legs out from under them.

Sparks kept firing her K-16 Bryar pistol, with no success in locking in on the elusive wraith. The smoke was heavy and thick, most of the Twi'lek's shots were executed on instinct and a prayer. Those instincts were answered by way of a blaster bolt finding its target on the Battlelord's left bicep. Wreathing in pain, the two red highlighted silhouettes displayed on the HUD were just in front of the assassin. The rage swelled within him, and he allowed himself to be consumed with hatred. Leaping forward, DarkHawk attacked, planting a flying front kick into the chest of the Twi'lek's gunman. The blow launched Sparks rearward, slamming against the stone facade wall.

The tactical vest the gunman wore was nowhere near sufficient enough to take a blow like that. The rage and power behind the kick shattered the man's sternum and immediately began gasping for air. A distinctive hum of a saber ignited, smoke now crackling against the blade's raw power. The blade gave an illuminating hue to the smoke, a fuchsia accent as the Battlelord began to wield it in a tight circular fashion. The blade began to spin and cut through the air. Cutting the man's torso from his lower appendages, as his upper half began to fall, another strike came in and split the man in half, yet again.

Sparks was trying to get her feet under her when the crimson blade appeared centimeters away from her throat. It's energy hummed and popped, Sparks tried to back away with no prevail.

"If you move, you're dead," DarkHawk said.

The blood-red helm of the Battlord was now in plain view of the Twi'lek's. Sparks began to laugh yet again. "You're too late, explosives have been set, and I have the detonator," she said confidently. DarkHawk watched the sweat drip from her upper brow, she would not go quietly. The Twi'lek slowly began to maneuver her left forearm so that the BlasTech Dur-24 Wrist Laser would hit her assailant square in the chest. Before the Twi'lek could get any further in her escape attempt, DarkHawk quickly maneuvered to one side and brought the blade of the saber down across both forearms, severing them from Sparks' arms. She screamed in agony, the pain resonating through her entire body, Her hands and part of her forearms now lay in between her legs.

DarkHawk looked down on his target, "There will be none of that today, we have plans for you wench," DarkHawk said.

"You're dead, Sith! You are so dead! I will pull your flesh from your bones! The Brotherhood cannot save this platform. Elysium is coming," she growled.

"That may be true, but today we are going to get you out of here. We have some detailed conversations ahead of us.

"YOU WILL GET NOTHING FROM ME SCUM!"

DarkHawk picked up one of her severed hands, holding it up in front of the Twi'lek's face. "I have these..." DarkHawk said sarcastically. Sparks growled ferociously at the Sith.

Activating his comlink, DarkHawk hailed his Duros friend. "Ty, target secured, let's get out of here. Like immediately!"

"Already ahead of you boss, approaching the balcony now..."

After the Duros assisted in clearing the room, he left his perch to be ready the ship just for this instance. It was his plan, he laid out the details, so a sense of pride was washing over him. He loved it when a plan came together.

DarkHawk grabbed Sparks and set her up on her feet. She made a futile attempt at resisting as she stood up, executing a roundhouse kick and catching the Battlelord in the wounded bicep. Gritting his teeth in pain, that strike just enraged DarkHawk. He slammed Sparks up against the wall and threw a right cross to her jaw. The Twi'lek's head bounced off the stone wall yet again and fell into unconsciousness. DarkHawk picked her up and slung her over his shoulder.

The whine of the Decimator's Ion engines could be heard as Ty positioned the ship for extraction. Darkhawk took no care for his prisoner as he threw her into the open cargo hold of the Decimator.

"Would it trouble you much to put some hastiness to this extraction endeavor, Sir? Sensors are picking up a lot of incoming. Far be it from me not to be hospitable, but I prefer a hasty retreat this go around, shall we?" Ty said, regally.

DarkHawk jumped into the cargo hold just as the private entrance to the VIP suite burst open. The Twi'lek's pets were coming to rescue their master. Ty was quite right, and the Hive Mind Marines were nasty cretin's to deal with. Today was not that day to engage, though the Collective parishioners would argue that. The Decimator's cargo hold door was closing, and the Marines were firing at the ship. The barrage of fire was oppressive, to say the least. Two of the Marines took flight from the balcony with the aid of their Mitrinomon Z-6 Jetpacks.

Ty had activated all weapons systems at takeoff, the Decimator's Anti-Pursuit Laser Turret automatically targeted the two Marines in flight and began to fire. The first Marine exploded like an overfilled balloon, and the second almost made it to the cargo hold door before losing his head. Spinning the ship around, Ty smiled as he reversed the thrusters and fired the turbo lasers. Both the top and bottom mounted turbo lasers ripped through the VIP suite and the remnants of fleshy tissue of the Hive Marines.

Punching the throttles forward, Ty was not going to stick around for any reinforcements that were left on the platform. DarkHawk searched Sparks for her remote detonator and was disgusted at the fact she had not one on her. Enraged at her ruse, DarkHawk grabbed the female agent by one of her handless arms and dragged her to the ship's small medical bay. Bones, the *Tārōn*'s medical droid, was already prepping for some meatball surgery. Slamming Sparks into one of the med beds, Bones began to remove all of Sparks equipment and strapped her tightly in. "Make sure she can not get free Bones," DarkHawk said.

"Affirmative, Sir. I will tend to your wounds monetarily," Bones replied.

The newly upgraded Ion engines came in handy today, as they quickly put the platform at a distance. Ty had programmed the NAV computer with the jump coordinates and was about to make the jump to lightspeed when DarkHawk sat in the co-pilot seat.

"A little worse for wear, sir?" Ty asked.

"Somewhat..." replied DarkHawk.

"Why is Bones not patching you up?" asked the Duros.

"In a moment, I need to inform the Overlord," DarkHawk said.

Switching to a secure COMM channel, DarkHawk hailed the Perdition.

"Perdition this is DarkHawk"

The Consul of Clan Naga Sadow replied. "Takagari, I trust you were successful?" the Overlord asked.

"Yes, Sir. We have the target. Although we have another situation that needs to be addressed, my Liege." DarkHawk said somberly.

There was a length of silence before the Overlord responded. "Which is..."

"The Twi'lek informed us, she had her minions plant explosives throughout the platform. Sparks said she had the remote detonator, but none could be found on her person. They know we're coming to liberate the platform, Sir."

Another pause, this time, when the Overlord spoke, there was a deep inflection of intensity to his words. "Bring her to me, Takagari..."

"As you command my Liege..." DarkHawk replied.

Ty reached up and moved the throttles forward, making the jump to lightspeed.

The End