

## Unknown twins

### Xantros

#### 41 ABY, Seraph, Caperion system

Xantros looked around and smiled with satisfaction. The first phase of his carefully planned operation was successful. He passed through customs and did not get recognized by the custom officers. He did not expect that he would make it. He was one of enemies of the Empire, so he thought that someone would realize who he was. On the other hand, he was not present in the Imperial space for over a year. A lot happened during his absence. A civil war that unified whole planet under control of Clan Scholae Palatinae and its facade of the Empire. They were now focused on rebuilding the planet and solidifying of their rule. Lots of workers were moving through the spaceport as Trident Construction and Development Incorporated was awarded a contract for building of a new administrative complex on Seraph.

Based on the intel the Duros had gathered before arriving to the Imperial System, he acquired falsified ID card that said his name was Dolor Verum, an engineer employed by Trident Construction and Development Incorporated. He reached Seraph in a shuttle transferring workers hired by the company. It seemed that there were a lot of new people working in the spaceport and the sheer number of arrivals made it extremely difficult to filter out potential criminals. He just slightly affected custom officer's mind with the Force to trick him into letting him through without a thorough check of his ID card and baggage.

Now, it was the time to reach a temporary data storage facility. Though Xantros did not know, what would be the exact location of a datapad he was looking for, but he presumed it would be stored in a restricted section of the data storage facility. There was only one way to get there. The Force. He would not be able to accomplish his mission without the powers granted to him by his gift to use the Force. If he had lacked those powers, he would have been unable to achieve his goals as he so heavily relied on the Force. His attempt to steal the datapad was another example of a situation, which he could be successful in only thanks to his Force powers. Still, it was the only way to obtain what he wanted, so he continued his mission despite his own doubts about his own ways of working.

The Duros slowly approached the data storage facility, while he was still thinking about the Force and his reliance on it. He was not surprised by it since he memorized the map of the city and the route from the spaceport to the building that temporarily housed various data sources. He did not need to consciously think about the path to his destination point and could spend the time on thinking and concealing his presence in the Force to limit the risk of detection by Force-sensitive members of Clan Scholae Palatinae.. However, since he reached the building, he had to focus on more immediate tasks.

Xantros entered the complex and walked to a reception, where he had to register his visit. He showed his fake ID card again and forged request from Trident Construction and Development Incorporated to access the restricted area of the facility. He waved his hand while explaining the situation to a clerk and bent man's mind to allow him to access data he required. The Human marked his request as a valid one and asked him to visit man's boss to receive the final approval. Again, thanks due to his power, Xantros was successful. The senior clerk turned out to be just another weak-minded bureaucrat, whom the Adept was able to dominate through the Force with ease. No matter of man's initial thoughts, he could not resist power of Duro's mind and personally led the former member of Clan Scholae Palatinae to the restricted area of the facility. He even looked up for the datapad himself, so Xantros did not have to waste his time on searching for it. The sooner he would leave the planet, the better and safer for him. Despite his efforts to remain unnoticed by forces of the Empire, it was only a matter of time that someone would recognize him and raise the alarm. It would make leaving the planet virtually impossible.

As soon as he grabbed the datapad that he was looking for, the Duros once again forced the clerk through mind domination to help him exit the building through the door for staff only since it

was less guarded than the main entrance. Surprisingly for the Adept, no one stopped them. Knowing how much attention the Empire paid to the internal security, it seemed to him to be way too easy. He started wondering, if the intel data he had received about secrets stored on the stolen datapad was correct. Though he was aware that he would not have a second chance to infiltrate the data storage center, he decided to wait once he would get off the planet to review the data.

Fortunately, whole operation took the Duros several hours, so the shift on the spaceport had already changed. Still, he had to trick another customs officer into thinking that he had already been checked so that he could pass the customs without questions about the reason behind his so quick departure from Seraph and the Caperion System. Once he made it out of the throne world of the Empire safely, he sighed and started meditating. His mind was heavily fatigued due to extended period of concealing his presence in the Force and exerting influence on minds of other people. He needed some rest before he would analyse the stolen data.

### **Four days later, an unspecified location in the Outer Rim**

Xantros started knocking his fingers on the only table in a pathetic room on a spacestation located in one of uncharted systems in the Unknown Space. It used to be one of spacestations built in secluded parts of the Galaxy after destruction of Starlight Beacon to help travellers navigate through the dangerous areas of the Outer Rime. During the fall of the Old Republic, locations of these stations were removed from any official maps of the Galaxy so that the Empire would not be able to utilize the network for their purposes. Heavily automated from the very beginning, some of these space stations were discovered by pirates, smugglers and warlords, who brought additional maintenance droids to keep the stations operational. As per Xantros' knowledge, the station he was at was visited only a handful of times a year by its new *owners* and it was open to anyone requiring a secret location to hide at. It guaranteed safety, but the Duros was growing more and more impatient.

The stolen datapad turned out to be heavily encrypted and he was unable to get through the encryption despite some training and experience in hacking various operational systems. He had to call in a favour from a more gifted hacker. They met on the old space station on a previous day, but it was taking a lot of time to get through the encryption. Xantros was very curious about the content of the datapad as his operatives could not tell him anything about it apart from that it was extremely valuable. Finally, his patience was rewarded as the hacker entered the room and handed him the datapad. The fact that the usually extremely talkative Rodian was completely silent tipped the Adept that the hacker not only broke the encryption, but also read the secret files. They had to be somewhat shocking to make the Rodian look with suspicion and caution at the Duros.

Xantros quickly scanned through the info stored on the datapad and his eyes grew larger and larger as he learnt more and more details of the secret files. He understood the shock the hacker suffered from. The datapad included information about a secret cloning project that was conducted by the Empire. The documents suggested that every member of Clan Scholae Palatinae in the rank of the Knight or higher and equivalent ranks for Mercenaries and Loyalists serving in it last five years were taken genetic samples for cloning, including him. Also, the files also mentioned that the Duros was actually cloned over a year ago. That was why the Rodian was afraid of him. The hacker did not know if Xantros was a clone or the original person.

The Duros looked at the Rodian who helped him crack the safety measures of the datapad. It was nothing personal and he would prefer to be able to use his services in the future, but knowledge about the Imperial cloning project was too dangerous. The hacker could not leave the space station alive. Otherwise, someone might learn about it or Xantros' whereabouts from him and the Adept could not allow that to happen. His cunning mind already found a way to utilize the cloning project for his plan to take a revenge on the Emperor and whole Clan Scholae Palatinae. One day, he would replace the clone and use that opportunity to kill Kamjin. However, no outsider could know about the cloning project. Otherwise, they might pose a threat to his plans.

Xantros looked at the Rodian again. Of course, he could alter hacker's memory to make him

forget about the space station and meeting with the Duros. However, there was a risk that the Rodian could be found by operatives of Clan Scholae Palatinae and his memory could have been restored. The Adept was aware that he was a target of the Imperial spies and he was lucky to make it alive from his mission in the Caperion system. They might finally learn about his connection to the Rodian hacker and he could not allow that to happen. Once again, Xantros used his power to force the hacker to commit a suicide by flying his ship into the sun. An hour later, there was no sign of Rodian's presence on the space station or in the space system it was located at. The Duros watched the hacker dying in a power explosion from his own ship. With that problem gone, he had to somehow incorporate the knowledge about the cloning project to his plan of revenge.