

## Identity Crisis

Vic sat hunched over his desk. Flimplast and datapads were scattered over the top of it in disarray and he would occasionally have to sift through various piles just to find the right report.

Saving the galaxy was great, he thought, and a hell of a lot easier than catching up on JIE's business. While he did have a J-9 droid to handle most of JIE's issues, Cylon wasn't the one to balance things out periodically and make sure all of the numbers added up correctly.

The team had been planetside for a few weeks and it was starting to show. Vic, who had been a fighting trim 215 pounds when he arrived was up to 221...most of it from the rich food that A'sok had been whipping up lately. Apparently Baldin cuisine, while tasty, was also loaded with lots of spices that ensured the body maintained a nice amount of girth...something to do with long periods in cold water A'sok explained.

Pushing back from the desk he let his gaze linger on the rest of the office. A Holoprojector sat in the middle of the sunk-in lounge area. The room itself was almost 15 meters long, furnished with a rich wooden conference table and wetbar along the opposite wall. To his right the wall was floor to ceiling glass and stretched off for 12 meters, giving him a completely unobstructed view of the JIE landing pads. He stood, stretching up to his full 6'2" height and working out his joints. A thirty one year old shouldn't be feeling this run down he thought to himself. He finished and walked across the rich forest green carpet to the window.

Down on landing pad #2 Doog and Aray, two duros pilots were prepping their Z-10 Seeker for a run. My empire, Vic thought, watching several droids scurry around to assist the two blue skinned humanoids. The offices of JIE were set deep into the side of a glacier, far below the harsh cold wasteland of the planet Garnib's surface. The building was only several months old but had become home to not only his team but the various pilots he had running loads of Garnib crystals off the planet.

A knock on the door almost made him drop the Garnib crystal tumbler. "Yeah, it's open!" he yelled.

The large deep brown doors swung open and his teammate Klux strode in. The younger man was dressed in a royal blue tunic and trousers and knee high black leather boots. His face was tanned, but the lack of sunlight on Garnib was quickly undoing that. His shoulder length-brown hair matched his neatly trimmed goatee and was pulled back in a ponytail; his lightsaber casually slapped his right thigh as he strode in and leaned against the conference table between two deep brown leather chairs.

"Whats up?" he said, crossing his arms.

Vic held up the bottle and shook it back and forth. "About to partake of Perfo's little gift...want some?"

Klux held up his hand in refusal. "No thanks...but if you have something easier on the constitution..."

"Ah, some of that spit huh?" Vic asked smiling. He grabbed another tumbler and, after topping his off with the reddish-brown Rava, filled up the other with a non-alcoholic chocolate based drink and handed it to Klux. "Come on, lets go grab a seat," Vic said and headed to the sunken lounge.

He stepped down and dropped into the deep gold colored sofa that ran in a complete circle around the holoprojector. Vic settled into the sofa and let it almost engulf him. He grabbed the remote control and pressed a button that lowered the main windows' transparency level and dipped the room into semi-darkness. The holoprojector sprung to life and virtual fish appeared, suspended in the air above it; they dipped and swam lazily around in their virtual environment, oblivious to the two men watching their languid movements.

Klux stepped into the large circle next to him and took up a seat off to Vic's right. Vic leaned down and hit another button and soon light Jizz music was quietly playing in the background.

"Ah, I needed this break Klux, this JIE paperwork is killing me," he said taking a sip of the fiery-sweet Rava. A large blue creature was about to devour his virtual prey in front of him.

"Yeah, if we aren't out working to tear down the Empire then we are here, dealing with other troubles."

Vic cocked an eyebrow and looked sideways. "Other troubles?"

Taking a sip of his maroon colored drink, the Jedi nodded and continued. "I think everyone is just getting cabin fever. They realize we need the downtime but are anxious to get back to taking missions from Jax...and earning a little money."

Vic snorted. "Money? What do they need credits for? They eat, sleep and hang out here for free. Sometimes I think I'm running a friggin' orphanage," he snickered. He had given everyone administrative positions that provided some pocket money but some members, like A'sok, had developed a taste for the more expensive things in life.

"Well, it's that and ...Baal and I..." Klux just shook his head without finishing. Vic had picked up on the friction between the two Jedi, something that had been manifesting under the surface for a while.

"Yeah, what's going on with you two? I mean, aren't you both in tune with the 'force' and all that?"

"Well, yes and no. It's true both of us are practitioners of the force. However, Baal's understanding is based off of a religion he learned on Fibuli...whereas I was instructed

By Da'Jony in the ways of the old masters and..." Vic waved off the rest of it.  
"Look man, it's all the same to us regular folks. You use the force, he uses the force. It's like saying there is a difference between stormtroopers and storm commandos...at the end of the day they are still Imperials, right?"

Nodding Klux finished his drink. "I guess its something he and I will just have to work out..."

"Yeah, thank the stars there is only two of you!" Vic said sipping his drink.  
They sat watching the holo in silence for a few minutes. The image had shifted from fish to avian predators now. Winged creatures spun and twirled in time with the light Klool Horn music drifting through the darkened office. Finally, Klux spoke.

"Oh, there is another reason I'm pulling you from your real work."

"Shoot."

"Well, after Windfall, I talked to Jax , and he said he needs a name."

"A name...of?" Vic asked, eyes half closed now. The Rava was working...well.

"The team...our team. He said that we needed a name for our unit, like a call sign. A'sok came up with the Ice Dragons. Baal was leaning towards the Black Claws..."

"Oh," Vic said. He was almost drifting now, the brightly colored birds seemed to be twisting...one flying circles around the other.

"Vic?"

Klux's voice brought him out of it...but just barely. "I don't know Klux...how about ..."  
he broke off and watched the virtual birds dive and tussle, "Team Raptor?"  
Klux thought it over for a beat. "Raptor...Team Raptor...Raptor Unit...Raptor Squad..."

"That's it!" Vic said coming completely out of his Rava trip. "Raptor Squad...it's perfect!"

Klux sat quietly. "Raptor Squad...sure ...I mean we do strike fast, come out of nowhere...that's not bad..."

"Lets's go with it," Vic said, standing and hitting several buttons on the projector. As light returned to the room and the virtual avian drama blinked out of existence, Vic stretched out the last of the Rava relaxation. He was extremely relaxed now, the break doing him worlds of good. Klux stood and handed Vic his empty tumbler.  
"Thanks for the drink Vic, I'll get out of here so you can get some of your work done."  
He turned to leave when Vic spoke up.

“It’s not easy is it?”

Klux turned and gave him a half smile, “What’s not easy?”

Vic looked at the empty tumblers in his hands. “Doing what we do. Fighting and killing...and dying. And at the end of the day, the only family we have is each other, folks who, had the Empire never come to power you may not have even ever laid eyes on.”

Klux shrugged. “The force influences the future in unique ways Vic. Perhaps there is a reason we...Raptor Squad... were brought together.”

“Yeah...maybe, “ Vic said coming out of his malaise. “Well, back to the grind,” he said throwing Klux a small smile and gesturing towards the desk.

“Yeah, have fun.” Klux was at the door when he turned back. “Oh hey, don’t forget dinner’s in an hour...Kalron said A’sok is making fried Mon Cal Skee-bass, and he and Vanas are handling the side dishes”

“Wouldn’t miss it for the world,” Vic said dropping back into his chair. The pile of work didn’t seem that bad now.

THE END