

We made good time back to Birgis, landing smoothly next to the *Intervention* with very little fanfare. Miru quickly returned to her own work, getting the repair droids set up to make charging bays for the Naval and gunner B1s, while Julius and I started going over bounties, looking for our next target.

"We don't need anything massive," I assured Julius as we sat down. "We have enough filled gems for now, I just want to make sure to have extra. Plus, we aren't really doing anything else at the moment."

Between our first and second bounties, we had accumulated eighty-seven filled soul gems, which was a significant amount to work with. I planned on taking a day to work on enchanting before taking on whatever bounty Julius, and I found the following day. However, my comms went off before we could find anything worth our time.

"Nal?" I asked, pulling my comms from my pocket. "What's up?"

"We believe we have found someone who fits our criteria," He explained. "Three individuals, in fact. A pilot, copilot, and sensor expert. They already know each other... I believe they are a good fit."

"That's great news," I said, standing up from the lounge couch. "Are they willing to come see the ship so I can meet them?"

"They are."

"Good, hire a speeder taxi for them and come back."

Nal agreed and shortly after hung up, prompting me to turn around to Julius, the younger crewmember looking up from his datapad.

"They found someone?" He asked.

"Three someones apparently," I answered, shrugging at his curious look. "I don't know either. Anyway, keep looking and make a note of anything interesting, I need to go get ready for them."

"Sure thing, Boss."

"Oh, and don't mention the beskar or my magic until they are officially part of the crew."

"Figured as much."

I nodded and turned to the bridge, walking to the doorway and leaning in. Calima was sitting in her chair, reading a book. Without looking up, she nodded.

"No mention of magic or beskar," She repeated. "I heard. Good luck."

I chuckled and nodded, turning back down the hall. I stopped in my room to quickly clean up and change into something halfway presentable. When I was done, I started to make my way down to Miru, only to stop and jog back to the enchanting room. With a bit of fiddling, I sealed the door so no one could stumble into it.

When I was done locking up, I headed down to the workshop. Miru was leaning over her workshop computer, intent on whatever personal project she was working on now. I knocked on one of her tool chests and she spun around on her chair to face me.

"What's up, Boss?"

"Gonna have company soon, three candidates for the *Intervention* crew," I explained, Miru's eyes lighting up. "You can tag along, but no mention of beskar or my magic."

"Sure!" She agreed easily, tapping on her computer before standing and stretching. "Any idea what they are like?"

"Nal said he thinks they are a good fit," I said with a shrug. "Beyond that, not really. Still, he usually knows what he is talking about."

She hummed in agreement and followed after me as I made my way off of the *Chariot* and over to the *Intervention*. I quickly found the once storage room, now forge, that Vaz and Pola had set up on the second deck. I tapped the controls on the door, which opened smoothly to expose the interior.

The inside of the workshop was surprisingly only one or two degrees hotter than the rest of the ship, just enough to be noticeable but not enough to be uncomfortable. The room was filled with several machines, including what I was pretty sure was a high-temperature forge and an auto hammer. Pola and Vaz stood in front of a large screen on one side of the workshop, looking at a vaguely humanoid form slowly spinning on it while dressed in some basic armor.

"Hey guys, how's it going?" I asked, both of them turning around to greet us.

"Everything is going well," Vaz responded, Pola nodding from beside her. "We are just finishing the basic chest plate design."

"Good, that's good," I said with a nod. "You guys have been working hard, and I'm excited to see what you make. Between this and my enchanting, I have a good feeling we will make some impressive equipment."

"Right, about that," Pola started with a curious expression. "Is there anything we should know about how that works? Limitations on what materials you can use or anything?"

"As long as it's sturdy, it should work great," I explained. "No limitations on size, either. I got some to fit on my rings after all."

I held up my hand to show off my ring, Vaz nodding in understanding. Pola looked excited about the entire prospect, which only made me more eager to see what sort of stuff they would manage to make.

"Anyway, Nal and Tatnia found some people to interview," I explained. "I'll probably be giving them a tour of the ship, so don't be surprised if we stop by. Do me a favor and don't mention the beskar or my magic. We can reveal that surprise after they agree to come on board."

"What if they find out and decide they can't work with us?" Pola asked nervously.

"Not much I can do about that, really," I responded with a shrug. "I can mitigate the risk by hiding it to the last second, but so be it if it's a breaking point. I'm not about to become a murderer or kidnapper to hide my secret."

"Alright, Boss," Pola agreed with a nod of his head. "We will clean up and hide the beskar we have here."

"Thanks, guys, keep up the good work," I said, patting the slapping the side of the door as I turned and left, heading back out of the *Intervention*.

Miru and I were waiting outside for about ten minutes before Tatnia and Nal zipped in, landing on the flat ground of the ship bay. They climbed off their speeder bikes, BX-2 and BX-3, climbing off their mounts on the back end of the bikes a second later. Both of the droids headed back into the *Chariot*, walking past the B2 guards as they went while Tatnia and Nal made their way to me. They didn't even have enough time to meet us halfway when an air speeder landed on the edge of the pad.

"That was fast," I commented under my breath, Tatnia nodding in agreement. "Don't mention the beskar or magic yet guys, we can explain that later."

"Do you really think we would mention that?" Tatnia asked with an eye roll.

"No, but better safe than sorry," I pointed out. "Now everyone is on the same page."

Tatnia reluctantly nodded in understanding as we all watched the airspeeder doors open. The first one out of the taxi was a human male, probably a few years older than me, though it was hard to tell. His head was shaved, and he had a scar running along his skull and down to

what appeared to be an implant replacement for his eye. I knew that medical tech existed for implants and replacement parts, but with the advent of Bacta, you hardly ever saw people opting for them, save full limb replacements. I knew it was possible to be allergic to Bacta, so maybe that was why.

As soon as the first person was out of the speeder, he stood to the side, letting the two other passengers out and shutting the door behind them. Both of them were [Mikkians](#), one male and one female. The first one out, the male, was a light green, darkening around his eyes, tendrils, and fingers. The female was a yellow hue, which darkened to a very light orange around their eyes and the tips of their fingers/. Their skin actually lightened to a pale yellow around their tendril hair.

The female immediately took the lead, walking ahead of the other two and heading directly for me. I could feel the rest of my crew settle in behind me as well, though more spread out. When our three candidates got close, I stuck my hand out.

"It's good to meet you. My name is Deacon Roy," I said, the woman reaching out her hand to shake mine.

"It is good to meet you, Deacon Roy. I am Vakim N'Mem. This is my copilot and brother, Dazem N'Mem, as well as my Ops and Sensor specialist, Allum Tynn. He is also my husband."

"Ah, so definitely a package deal then," I commented, nodding in understanding. "That's good. Why don't we head into the *Intervention* and talk."

"Agreeable, but be aware we have friends who will note our absence should we disappear," She said, making my mind stutter a bit.

Behind her Allum, the cyborg slapped his forehead, partially hiding his red eye implant, though Dazem didn't seem to notice anything wrong at all.

"I understand," I said with a nod when I had recovered. "Rest assured, you can leave whenever you want."

She nodded, and together, the group set off. I noticed Nal peeled off and headed to the *Chariot*, but Tatnia and Miru came with us. We climbed on board and quickly made our way to the large lounge on the second deck of the *Intervention*.

As we sat down, Vakim nodded in approval, looking around at the interior.

"The ship is in good condition, but not surprising as I can see the hallmarks of it once being an Imperial ship. Did you purchase this from a corrupt official or steal it?"

My jaw dropped at her bluntness, and I could see Tatnia tense. Allum let out a long sigh, shaking his head.

"I'm sorry, I tried to warn your second in command, but I don't think I prepared her for this," he said, looking apologetic. "Mikkians are known for their bluntness, and my wife is an outlier even among her people. None of us would care if you bought or stole it from an Imp, as long as you're not working for them."

"No, we aren't working for the Imperials. We stole the *Intervention*," I responded, watching them carefully. "In fact, we should warn you we have worked with the Rebellion a few times now and plan on working closer with them in the future."

"Thank you for your honesty," Vakim said, looking at her compatriots, both of them giving her nods of approval before she continued. "You should know that the three of us were part of the Rebellion for several years, and only recently have left their service."

"May I ask why?"

"Our previous commanding officer was under the impression that as Rebels, we should not receive compensation for our actions, that we should be working from the goodness of our hearts," She explained, her tendrils darting around behind her head, seemingly in agitation. "When we attempted to ask those above him for some sort of compensation, he convinced them that we were simply being greedy, that he had already compensated us. We persevered for some time with this incorrect reputation, before eventually leaving."

"That's... the primary reason why we haven't joined up yet. I want to help, but I also looking to support myself and my crew," I explained, getting an approving nod from all three candidates. "When we do, I will make sure to stipulate that we expect a portion of any credits earned for our work. Who did you serve under?"

"Commander Gadic was in charge of our vessel, as well as the two freighters we were charged with protecting," Vikan explained. "We moved cargo and occasionally people around the galaxy."

"Ah, well... yeah, I can't say I'm surprised," I admitted, shaking my head. "He didn't give me the best impression."

"You've met him?" Vikan asked, sounding surprised.

"Yeah, he seemed like the kind of person who is a stickler for rules, but only because he knows how to abuse them," I said. "Spent a lot of time trying to get on my good side. He works with General Syndulla now, as her aide or second in command, I'm not sure exactly. Did people really not believe you? I'm shocked that he managed to get away with that so easily."

"I'm afraid that our bluntness did not do us any good," Dazem admitted, his sister nodding in reluctant agreement. "Many people mistook our honesty and bluntness as being cruel. As a result, many found it easy to believe we were only rebels for a payout. I also believe it is why we were stuck babysitting freighters with our experience."

"What kind of experience?"

"All three of us served in the late parts of the Clone Wars," She explained. "When the conflict ended, we returned to Mikkia, as many of our people did. We served briefly in the private sector, before leaving to join in the early days of the Rebellion."

"So... you guys have been at this for a while. You don't have any complaints with us working closer and closer with the Rebellion?"

"As long as we are not forced to rejoin completely, and we are paid fairly for our contributions to the group, no."

"That's good. Tell me, what ships have you worked with, and do you think you will be able to fly this ship?"

We chatted for another few hours, talking about their experience and going over their qualifications in general. Most of it was me asking questions that Nal and Tatnia already asked in some way, but the three of them seemed to be fine with repeating themselves, which I saw as a good sign. All in all, I found myself appreciating their bluntness, even if it caught me off guard more than a few times. Allum also seemed like a good addition.

Eventually, we went around for a tour of the ship, showing off the additional turrets, which all three of them appreciated. They seemed to know their way around without my prompting, not a surprise, considering all three of them had worked on a *C70 Consular*-class before.

I was also not surprised to learn that they all had less than positive reactions to the CIS droids but seemed open to working with them as long as their programming stuck. I assured them that they had been working for a while now and we hadn't seen any issues so far. Allum seemed to be the most resistant to the idea of working with them, but reluctantly admitted they would be possible as long as Vikan and Dazem were the ones in charge of piloting.

"Clankers can't fly worth a damn," He explained. "But they can work as gunners. Just be sure to wipe their memories frequently."

I also introduced them to Vaz and Pola, showing off the forge room as well. They were understandably confused about why we had a forge in a ship until I explained the custom armor project, leaving out the beskar. I made sure to explain that Pola would be working with them as well, as he would be the lead engineer for the ship.

When the tour was over, we said our goodbyes, and I promised to call them within twenty-four hours with either a confirmation or denial. Vakim agreed but also pointed out they would be discussing if they wanted to take us up on the offer.

"So, what do you think?" Tatnia asked as we boarded the *Chariot* after the three potential candidates had left. "Bit odd, but they seemed to know their way around the ship."

"I liked them!" Miru said with a smile. "Davem seemed to know a bit about ship maintenance, which is good."

"Let's get everyone together and talk about it. Tatnia, order something to eat, get it delivered here," I said, getting a nod in response. "We can talk about it after we've eaten."