

Holo Home

Part I

Sylas stepped out of the elevator as it came to a stop on the Infiltrator Wing corridor. Briskly walking through the corridor, he made it to his assigned room. While punching in his key code, he was able to make out muffled groans coming from within. Placing his hands on his SE-14r Pistol, he punched in the last number, unlocking, and opening the door. He unholstered his pistol, rushing in and aiming at the source of the noise. Much to his surprise, the intruder happened to be none other than Badkid lounging on his bed with an empty bottle of Chalquilla cradled against his chest. Sylas sighed and holstered his weapon, as the door automatically closed behind him with a soft hiss.

“You can’t be serious.” He mused as he walked closer to the semi-conscious Lieutenant. Badkid looked up at Sylas, smiling softly.

“Oh heeeey, took ya long ‘nough,” he said through a drunken smile. He attempted to sit up, only for Sylas to catch him before he dove face-first onto the metal floor. “I’m okay,” he mumbled, trying to push Sylas away. Sylas sighed as he steadied him on the edge of the bed, taking the empty bottle from his hands and placing it on his desk. “Where ya been?” Badkid asked with a heavy tongue.

“Just got back from the planet, we got their power stations up and running.” Sylas responded as he sat at his desk. “Why are you here?” He asked as he watched his friend attempt to stand, only to flop back onto the bed.

Badkid shrugged, looking around for something. “I wanted to share a drink with my friend. Is that not allowed?” He asked before muttering to himself “Where the hell is that bottle?”

“You drank it all, dillweed.” Sylas responded, pointing to the empty bottle on the desk. “I’m curious as to how the hell you’re still breathing after drinking that much, honestly.” Badkid shrugged with a giggle.

“Guess the universe ain’t allowing me to die just yet.” Sylas rolled his eyes to the cynic response.

“Right... Anyways, you should probably go to med bay. Before you actually die.”

“Awww you care about meeeee,” Badkid teased, smiling from ear to ear.

“No, we just can’t afford a short-staffed squadron.” Sylas responded coldly. He stood and approached Badkid on the bed, grabbing his arm and pulling him up to his feet. “Come on, get up, you drunken lard.”

Badkid groaned as he stood, swaying on his feet as Sylas walked him to the door. Punching in the numbers on the keypad, Sylas opened the door. Just then, Lieutenant Commander Xylo Pethtel was walking past towards his quarters. He stopped when he heard the hiss of an opening door, watching Sylas escorting a drunken Badkid through it.

“Oh, hey Sylas,” he said cheerily. He looked at Badkid with scrutiny. “Is he alright?”

Sylas shook his head, trying his best to keep Badkid on his feet. “This idiot decided to drink a whole bottle of Chalquilla,” Xylo’s eyes went wide as Sylas nodded in understanding. “My reaction exactly.”

“Well, get him to med bay, then.” Xylor muttered, watching Badkid sway and mumble some words to an obscure song.

“I plan to.” Sylas responded. He turned to walk down the hallway towards the elevators when Xylo spoke up again.

“Oh, hey, did you happen to hear?” Sylas stopped to listen to Xylo, keeping a tight grip on Badkid’s arm, keeping him on his feet. “Admiral Silwar approved holo messages to our families this year.”

“Really?” He asked as Xylo produced his data pad, showing the announcement posted by the Admiral. Sylas subconsciously grabbed the data pad to better read, causing him to release his grip on Badkid, who fell with a solid *THUD* on the ground, followed by a groaning complaint. Sylas ignored him as he read through the guidelines and expectations. “Interesting...” He mused as Xylo knelt by Badkid to check on him. Xylo looked up at Sylas, who simply handed him his data pad back, turned on his heels, and walked back towards his quarters.

“What about BK?” Xylo asked as he glanced down at a delirious Badkid.

“Tag, you’re it.” Sylas responded flatly as he opened his door and stepped back in.

“WAIT A MINUTE—” Xylo began but Sylas closed and locked his door. Xylo groaned and looked down at Badkid, who had begun to drool and giggle incoherently. He sighed and grabbed Badkid’s legs, dragging him down the hall towards the elevator shafts. “Fluff you, Sylas...”

Part II

After setting up the holographic camera, Sylas changed into his Dress Uniform. Adjusting his ribbons in front of a mirror, he quietly mused about what to say. It had been far too long since he last spoke to his mother, let alone sent any sort of message home. After adjusting his slacks, he took a long look at himself in the mirror.

Just a year ago, he was a wanderer among the stars. Seeking purpose had brought him to the doorsteps of the TIE Corps. Shortly after his training, he was assigned to the Infiltrator Wing aboard the *Challenge*; an assignment he reluctantly accepted. However, the assignment has been nothing short of serendipitous, seeing his squad and ship mates slowly become a family to him. Brothers and sisters in-arms, fighting for a common goal. He smiled to himself as he finished adjusting his Dress uniform, stepping away from the mirror and standing before the camera. Taking a deep breath, he set his camera to record.

"This is Lieutenant Commander Sylas Pitt," He began, attempting to use an authoritative tone, holding his head high. "This message is intended for Rika Pitt."

He paused for a minute before shaking his head and stopping the recording. "No, that's too serious..." He muttered to himself, as he began to pace, racking his brain for alternatives. The light tap of his boots on the metal ground was the only sound in his quarters, as he fiddled with the hem of his Dress uniform pensively. He stopped and faced the camera again, taking a deep breath before beginning to record again.

"Hey mom, I hope this message finds you well," he began, taking a moment to steady himself before continuing. "It's been a while since we've seen each other, let alone speak, but I wanted you to know that I'm okay. I, uh... I hope you're okay, too..." He trailed off, feeling suddenly lost for words.

He sighed and stopped the recording before flopping down on the edge of his bed. He held his face in his hands with a groan, placing his elbows on his knees and leaning forward. He held himself there for a minute, trying to think and clear his head at the same time. Sitting up straight and looking at the camera, he pondered about how to best approach this message home. His mother was once an Officer in the Imperial Navy. He couldn't decide if she expected proper formalities, or if she expected a simple message from her only son.

Better safe than sorry, I guess, he thought to himself as he stood up and fixed his Dress uniform once again. He stood before the camera, taking another deep breath, steadying himself and taking a formal stance. Setting the camera to record, he began once again.

"This is Lieutenant Commander Sylas Pitt of Firebird Squadron aboard the *Challenge*," he began, maintaining his posture with his arms behind his back. "I hope this message finds you well, mother. It has been almost two years since we last spoke or saw each other. I want you to sleep easy knowing that I am safe and alive." He smiled softly, beginning to relax his posture.

"We are currently in orbit around the planet of Tusorix. It's a small, independent system that will soon join us in our fight against the New Republic. Peace negotiations have been rocky, to say the least. We were supposed to have a moment of respite on the tropical planet before they were savagely attacked by an unknown entity. We had scuffles along the atmosphere and shores, but, thankfully, we triumphed. Some of the natives thought it was our presence that caused the attack before they realized that the attacks came from their own oceans." He paused for a moment, reeling in his memories of the battle, remembering seeing Badkid's Y-Wing go down into the water, followed by his own, waking up on the shore, and eventually fixing the destroyed power supplies of the planet. He sighed before continuing.

"BK made it here, safe and sound. I'm not sure if he's going to record a message for his parents, considering he had to be dragged to med bay verging on alcohol poisoning. So, if you could, as a favor to me, let his parents know that he's alive and well? I'm sure he'd appreciate it once he sobers up." He chuckled softly.

"As far as my career goes..." he paused, thinking for a moment before continuing. "My career has been steadily going. Due to the nature of my assignments, most of the information I'm sure you'd want to know are severely classified. I *can* mention, however, how well it's been going. As you heard in the beginning of this message, I have been promoted up to a Lieutenant Commander, and there are rumors that my promotion to Commander is not too far from now." He smiled a bit, unfolding his hands from behind his back, clasping them in front of his torso. He sighed, taking a moment to compose himself, feeling tears well up in his eyes.

"I miss you, mom... The two years I spent wandering have been difficult and full of hardships. I worked on Corellia for a year and made my way to my assignment aboard the *Challenge*. I..." he trailed off for a moment before coming back to it. "I wish you were here, mom. It terrifies me to know that you are on Coruscant by yourself, surrounded by sympathizers of anarchy and discord." He shook his head, wiping his tears, slightly sniffing. He sighed and looked at the camera again. "My salary isn't exactly the best, but I have been able to save up some credits so far... And I plan on getting you out of Coruscant, mom. We'll have plenty of land to have a farm, away from the denizens of the New Republic." He smiled at the camera, imagining his mother smiling at the message as well.

"The Corps has been amazing, mom. It's... quite a bit different from the old Empire. In a good way. There are some Ewoks and Wookies that work with us, and, arguably, some of our best pilots as well." He chuckled softly. "The Corps has completely removed the Xenophobic guidelines that the old Empire enforced, and it has helped us realize that by not excluding someone of a different race, we can grow and become stronger, working together towards a common goal: Peace and order in the galaxy. We realized that structure is not a human concept, and any race willing to fight for order is welcomed in our fold."

He fell silent for a moment, lost in thought, before looking at the camera again. "Well, like I said, it has been a rather successful year for us. The *Challenge* has been awarded the title of *Flagship* of the TIE Corps after an arduous month of competing against the other ships. It was... A painfully long month, but we came out victorious." He looked down at his ribbon rack on his chest, reaching up and gently holding the Bronze Star beneath it. "I earned this for my participation." He said with a smile before letting go of the star and looking back at the camera. "As far as my assignment goes... I can't say much other than the fact that we have been making it difficult for the New Republic to get a solid footing against us or Imperial interests." He smirked, giving the camera a wink. He chuckled softly, adjusting his uniform once again.

"Well... That's all I really have to say for now. I miss you, mom, and I hope you are doing well. You can surely expect to hear from me soon, possibly to get you out of there. Until then, please, stay safe. I love you, and I hope you have a wonderful holiday season. This is Lieutenant Commander Sylas Pitt, signing off." He gave a quick salute before shutting the camera down.

He sighed softly, reaching for his data pad on his desk. Glancing at the screen, he saw that Xylo had messaged him.

"*You owe me for this.*"

"Oh, shit, I forgot about BK." He said as he ran out of his room, still wearing his Dress uniform.

Part III

The med bay doors hissed open, as Sylas stepped through to find Badkid on a bed to the left. Sylas sighed and walked over to him, sitting by the bed. Badkid groaned and turned his head to face his friend, scrutinizing Sylas for a moment.

“Uh, why exactly are you wearing your Dress uniform?” He asked, sitting up a bit.

“Admiral Silwar green-lit holo messages back home,” Sylas responded. “I just finished recording mine to mom.”

“Oh, sweet... I thought I died for a minute, and you were already preparing the funeral.” Badkid chuckled softly.

“Trust me, if you died, I’d be first in line to pull the lever on the airlock,” Sylas joked as he leaned back in his seat. “Not much of a ceremony if you’re just a Lieutenant.” He smirked as Badkid glared at him.

“It’s not my fault I haven’t been promoted.” He grumbled.

“Actually, it is.” Sylas said as he pulled out his data pad, opening Badkid’s personnel file, and handing the pad to him. “You’re just too dense to figure it out.”

Badkid yanked the pad out of his hand, as his eyes scanned the screen. He paused and shrugged before looking back at Sylas. “Okay...? Mind giving me a hint, then?”

Sylas rolled his eyes before snatching the pad out of Badkid’s hand. “Passing IWATS was only for you to be assigned to a squadron, ya dunce.” He leaned back in his seat, putting his data pad away. “You gotta pass the TCCORE exam.”

Badkid rolled his eyes and groaned, laying himself back down. “I didn’t join a military operation to *study*.”

“No, but you’re expected to know what is expected of you. Including your knowledge of Pilot Manual.” He smirked, knowing his friend all too well. “Speaking of expectations, do you plan on sending a message home to your parents?” He asked curiously.

Badkid sighed and shrugged. “I don’t know, honestly. What is there to say? I’m alive, I’m well, I’m working and making credits... There really isn’t much to report.”

Sylas chuckled softly before standing up. “Well, I told mom to give your folks your regards. Now, focus on detoxing. We got a lot to do when you get better.” He began to walk out of the med bay as Badkid called out after him.

“The hell does that even mean? Did something happen?”

“No, but you got a lot to study,” Sylas responded with a smirk as the med bay doors hissed closed, cutting off the protesting groan from Badkid.