

“Full Spectrum”

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Time onboard a capital ship was an artificial thing. There was no sun rising outside the ship to tell Flight Officer Maptoo Moog that it was early morning, only the same monotonous black starfield that, if anything, should have said it was midnight. But the chrono in his quarters said it was early morning, and that was what the ship believed, and so that’s what the ship manifested.

Despite the Rebel Alliance’s Mon Calamari Cruiser *Crescent Star* being crewed and operated every minute of the day, early morning always felt quiet inside Maptoo’s quarters. Calm. Still. He loved the peace. The tranquility. The Gran soaked up every second he could, because much too soon the ship would rise from its slumber and plunge back into the chaos of a galactic civil war.

The overhead light in his darkened quarters was off, a concession to his roommate who was still sleeping fitfully on the bottom bunk nearby. Maptoo considered himself lucky to share his quarters with someone else who was easy-going and enjoyed relaxation and peace, unlike some of their other squadmates. Usually they were both already easing into their day at this point, but if his friend needed some extra sleep, Maptoo would allow him to have it.

Sitting at his makeshift desk, Maptoo briefly held his paintbrush in his large, misaligned teeth while he adjusted the small clip-on light for a better angle on his easel. Once he got the light reoriented so it wasn’t casting shadows on the part of the flimsi he was working on, he took his paintbrush in his thick fingers once more and went back to work. Most of his abysmally inadequate supplies of paint went toward painting the helmets for the Corona Squadron and Quake Squadron pilots and gunners onboard, but sometimes, like now, he had the opportunity to paint what he wanted for the sheer enjoyment of the craft. Trying to paint an aerial view of Port Pixelito from memory was a gratifying challenge that simultaneously let him reminisce about home.

A short time later, he was trying to figure out how to get around the fact that he needed a specific shade of green in one particular area, but he was just about out of green paint and couldn’t afford to keep depleting his other colors by constantly mixing them. His dilemma was interrupted when the alarm on the bedside chrono blared. The noise caused his roommate to toss and turn once more, then let out a low groan before slapping at the chrono with one of his four hands to shut it off. The alarm quieted.

Maptoo raised his three eyes to watch Flight Officer Tictincto Tnis, always called Slurry, cover his head with his thin pillow and remain in bed. He draped his two upper arms over the pillow to hold it in place. “*Tgnit srelnek*. I do understand not how you can be awake already,” Slurry mumbled, his accented voice even more muffled by the pillow. “It’s early too.”

“It’s not too early. You’re usually awake by now,” Maptoo reminded him. “You’re the one getting lazy on me and sleeping in.”

“I’m tired just,” Slurry replied. He did sound pretty tired, more than Maptoo would have expected for the relatively light workload their squadron had had in the past few days.

“Why? Going out gambling all night after you’re off duty?” Maptoo asked.

“I wish,” Slurry said. “Then maybe I would be tired and have credits instead of being tired and broke.” Slurry sighed, then reluctantly pulled his blanket off with one of his lower hands. That hand then halfheartedly tried to pull the pillow away from his face, but his two upper arms didn’t relinquish it at first. Finally he seemed to give up and resign himself to the inevitable. Pillow set aside, Slurry slowly sat up and slid out of bed. He turned the overhead light on and shuffled around their small quarters, collecting his morning toiletries and a uniform for the day.

When Slurry walked past Maptoo on his way to the refresher they shared with the quarters next door, Maptoo blinked as he noticed something. The Bilgana’s charcoal-grey skin had a slight bluish tint to it that Maptoo had never seen before. Maptoo squinted to get a better look and make sure he saw the colors accurately, but then Slurry was through the ‘fresher door, and it shut behind him.

Maptoo’s kinked antennae twitched in confusion, and then he shrugged and began putting his painting supplies away. The ship was waking up; it was almost time to go on duty.

The harsh lighting of the hangar made it nearly impossible for Maptoo to determine if the same unusual hue in Slurry’s complexion from that morning was still present, but despite that particular lack of confirmation, Maptoo couldn’t ignore the niggling worry that something wasn’t right with his friend.

He’d surreptitiously kept an eye on Slurry all day, whenever he could. At first he thought that Slurry’s slow start that morning would be shaken off by the time breakfast was over and he’d had a chance to wake up more, but it wasn’t. As the hours passed, Slurry continued to move just as slowly and deliberately, with even a fleeting wince here and there.

But this... was even more concerning.

“Yes, I said I would get it, and I will!” The angry words were hard to hear over the general din of Corona Squadron’s subhangar, but standing by his own X-wing, Maptoo was close enough to Slurry’s starfighter to see the short, aggravated Bilgana facing off against the Coronas’ Executive Officer, Lieutenant Steen “Snubber” Weas. Plus, Maptoo’s ears were sharp enough to pick up the emotion in Slurry’s hot words, if not the exact words themselves.

A flash of surprise crossed Snubber’s face, mirroring what Maptoo felt. Maptoo wasn’t sure what instruction or request had instigated the reaction, but apparently Snubber hadn’t been expecting his own laid-back wingman to have such an issue with it. Snubber’s expression quickly cycled through several variations as he seemed to be momentarily indecisive about how to react. Maptoo recognized his “superior officer to junior officer” face, his similar “Executive Officer to subordinate” face, and his “peer-to-peer wingman” face, along with one or two Maptoo couldn’t decipher. Maptoo had never envied the tricky dynamics of that particular pairing. He didn’t know which approach Snubber settled on: the Human’s eyes seemed to harden, but he lowered his volume and leaned in closer to talk to Slurry, putting the words out of audible range for Maptoo.

What he did hear, however, were soft bootfalls sneaking up behind him. In a rush of motion, suddenly two hands appeared, each cupping a single eye of his and blocking their sight.

His middle eye remained uncovered.

“Guess who,” a voice immediately behind him said.

“Hi, CC,” Maptoo replied.

His wingman, Flight Officer Chryse “CC” Cerac, sighed and lowered her hands. “It’s no fun playing that with you,” she teased, stepping around him to a more normal conversational position. “Maybe I should hire Slurry to do this to you instead. He’s at least got more hands than you have eyes.”

“He’s too short to reach with all of them.”

“I’ll make him stilts. Or give him a jetpack.”

“Too bad I’d never hear *that* coming.”

The black-haired Human grinned, then she pulled a datacard from a pocket on her flight suit. “Here are the diagnostic results you wanted.”

“Thanks.” Maptoo pocketed it absently, then the ongoing animated situation between Slurry and Lt. Weas distracted him again. He turned his gaze back in their direction.

CC noticed his new area of focus, and she sidled beside Maptoo and peered in the same direction for a short time. Mechanics, technicians, and droids were all visible in the general area. She leaned over and whispered, “Who are we spying on?”

“Slurry just snapped at Snubber,” Maptoo whispered back.

“What? *Our* Slurry?”

“Yes.”

“My future jetpack employee?”

“Yes.”

“Snapped at Snubber.”

“Yes.”

CC considered that for a moment, and then said, “So. Shapeshifter,” as if it was the only possible explanation. Then her expression lightened. “Hey, try saying that three times fast: ‘Shapeshifter Slurry snapped at Snubber.’”

Maptoo didn’t take the bait and instead continued, “I think something’s off, but I don’t know what. He isn’t sleeping well, and he’s seemed sore today too.”

“That could be anything, or even nothing,” CC said. “I could give you twenty reasons off the top of my head why someone here might not be sleeping well, at least ten of which I’ve experienced myself. If he’s not sleeping, it could explain the snapping too.”

“I know. But whatever it is, it’s got to be bad for him to reach that point.” Maptoo sighed. “I’ll talk to him after he’s done with Snubber.”

“Want some backup?”

“Thanks, but no, I’m a little concerned that might make it worse.”

“All right. Yell if you need anything.” CC offered him a grin before walking over to her own neighboring X-wing, from where Maptoo suspected she’d be discreetly spying on the upcoming exchange herself. Maybe even researching Clawdite abilities on a datapad or something.

Maptoo waited another couple of minutes until Snubber walked away, looking disgruntled. Then Maptoo approached Slurry as casually as he could, trying to act like he hadn’t witnessed any problems and absolutely nothing was out of the ordinary.

“Hi, Slurry,” Maptoo said.

Slurry turned and narrowed all four eyes at him. “What?” he asked flatly.

Even knowing Slurry wasn't in a good mood, that reaction from his easy-going squadmate still rattled Maptoo a little. "I wanted to see how you were doing, since I know you didn't get much sleep last night," Maptoo said.

Slurry waved a lower hand dismissively while his upper arms remained crossed. "As if no one here ever does get not sleep enough. Save your concern for problems actual. I'm fine."

There it was— now that he was closer, Maptoo could detect the same faint blue tint to Slurry's skin. He'd seen greenish tints on his squadmate before, usually the rough equivalent of a blush in other humanoids, but never this subtle blue hue. Besides, those greenish blushes were always fleeting, while this blue tint seemed to be long-lasting. "Do you need anything? If you're not feeling well or need some rest, we can help out," said Maptoo.

Slurry actually growled softly. "I am *fine*. This is not a life luxurious. I know that. No one on this ship whole is feeling wonderful and rested completely. I am not different from them, and I will do my duties like everyone else too."

"Are you sure?" Maptoo pressed. "You seem to have some sort of blue tint to your skin I've never seen before. Does that mean something's wrong?"

With a scoff, Slurry said, "You are seeing things. Bilgana do turn not blue. That's ridiculous. Now if you will excuse me, I have work to do." He turned and walked away toward a power cart hooked up to his X-wing, clearly ending the conversation.

Maptoo watched him go, then slowly turned and headed back to his own X-wing, deep in thought.

Maptoo was surprised the pilots' lounge was empty that evening, but he was glad for it. It was a lot easier to concentrate without the raucous conversations and teasing that the Coronas and Quakes usually filled it with in their off-duty hours.

As he worked at one of the lounge's computer terminals, he was also surprised at the criminally small amount of information in the ship's database about Bilgana physiology or even about Bilganas in general. The bluish tint was the only objective oddity he had to go on, and he couldn't find a single reference to what that might mean from a physical standpoint.

For the rest of the day after his conversation— or lack thereof— with Slurry, Maptoo had considered his options. Slurry didn't want help. He hadn't even been wrong— tired and stressed was the default mode of just about everyone on the ship most of the time, and if that's what Slurry was experiencing, how was it different from the state of anyone else? Maptoo had considered dropping the matter entirely. This wasn't his business.

Except... part of it was. Besides the simple fact that Slurry was his friend and Maptoo wanted him to be happy and feel good, there was another layer too. If Slurry wasn't well, that could have dangerous consequences for all of them in a dogfight or on a mission. That part was their leaders' responsibility, but Maptoo didn't want to go to Lt. Weas or Commander Mackin with concerns that ended up to be nothing but the same tiredness and stress that every other pilot was already experiencing: it would do no good, especially if Slurry said there was nothing wrong. The strong way it was manifesting in Slurry was unusual, but it wasn't like Lt. Weas wasn't aware of that. If there was something more going on, some out-of-the-ordinary situation, Maptoo had a responsibility to his squadmates to prove it wasn't just general stress and odd nagging feelings and to make Slurry and their superiors aware of those facts.

Except the blasted database didn't *have* any facts.

Maptoo switched tactics and called up the ship's medical database. If the blueness indicated a physical problem, this was where it should be.

The medical database had a little bit more than the general database did, but not much. There was still a surprising lack of detailed information, and there again wasn't anything about the blue tint. There wasn't anything about the green-tinted blushing either, which he looked for just to calibrate himself.

Maptoo tried every search term, search method, and file navigation he could think of, but he still came up empty.

This failure to locate any information was starting to get personal, and it was standing in his way of potentially protecting his friends.

He took a deep breath and pulled out of the ship's medical database to a more general Rebellion query. Slurry had told him before that a handful of Bilgana had joined the Rebellion ground forces. Maybe he could find one of those units and talk to them or see if they'd reported anything similar. That quickly proved extremely futile, however, and Maptoo silently cursed the Alliance's necessary secrecy and information compartmentalization.

He sat at the computer console for a bit and considered his next move. He was sure the information he needed existed somewhere; it was just a matter of finding it and accessing it from where he was.

Though he was the Coronas' resident go-to for computers and programming, Maptoo had never considered himself a slicer. He was good at finding his way through and around existing programs with odd tricks and could even write some code, but he'd never been skilled at sneaking through electronic backdoors undetected and changing programs to bend to his will in ways they weren't originally designed for. CC was better at tinkering with code than he was, but she didn't have as much conceptual programming knowledge as he did and likewise wasn't an action-holovid slicer.

He had one final idea. It was time to stop searching the long-shots and instead check with the one place that had to have the information: the Bilgana homeworld. Maptoo punched in commands to connect to the planet's public information database.

It loaded onto his computer console's display, but it looked nearly as sparse as what the ship's local database had. Maptoo tried to pull up Bilgan's query feature only to find that the ship's own security firewalls and programming denied him permission from sending or receiving data to or from that unsecured electronic location.

After numerous fruitless attempts at getting around it or changing the security software's obstinate mind about letting him past, Maptoo let out a long, exasperated breath. He pulled out his comlink and entered a frequency.

His wingman answered in short order. "CC."

"It's Maptoo," he replied. "Are you busy? I could use some help."

"Are you kidding? You'll be getting me away from Quiver. I'll be right there. What's up?"

"I'm in the lounge. I'm hitting a computer problem."

"Okay, see you in a bit. I'll bring my hammer."

A couple minutes later CC arrived, and Maptoo quickly brought her up to speed on what he was doing. But after fifteen minutes of her own attempts, CC declared herself out of ideas for getting past the ship's access and permission restrictions as well. She scrunched her nose at the

console in defiant thought.

Maptoo had been afraid of that since it meant more drastic measures would have to be taken to get what he needed, but he'd long since decided that he had to see this through.

The logical move now would be to get permission from Commander Mackin and go through the slow, regular channels for authorization and assistance from the computer security group to bypass the security measures, but Maptoo didn't believe that the logical path would work this time. The harder the information was to access, the less likely it was that he'd be able to convince his commander to let him do it, especially without a solid reason. Then Maptoo would be back to not having the information and being unable to determine if there was some hidden threat to Slurry and their squadmates through some unknown physical problem with his friend, and he'd be unable to convince the commander of his concerns there as well. Without facts to the contrary, it all still just looked like general low-level stress and sleeplessness. Everything hinged on accessing that data, so Maptoo would do that. But CC didn't need to be getting in trouble for it with him.

He took a breath to tell her to not worry about it and she should head back to what she was doing before, but before he could get a single word out, CC merely pulled out her comlink, contacted her astromech, and asked Ruby to meet them there.

Maptoo tried again and got the words out this time. "CC, it's okay. This is getting to be way beyond what I want to drag you into. I'll figure som--"

CC quickly shot him a look made of pure stubbornness. "If you think something's wrong, then we're going to fix it," she interrupted.

He recognized that tone and the futility of arguing against it. Maptoo fell silent and simply nodded, secretly glad for his wingman's support.

The red and white R2 unit rolled in soon after, and all it took was one request from CC for Ruby to plug his scomp arm into the console's access port and begin working. Maptoo waited uneasily: this was either going to be very good or very bad. There was no question that the droid was skilled and met the action-holovid slicer definition, but CC steadfastly refused to memory-wipe Ruby, and Maptoo had some private concerns about what that was doing to the droid's programming. An unexpected line of code from the increasingly unoptimized mess in the droid's memory banks could inadvertently trip the ship's security that Ruby was trying to bypass.

Maptoo didn't want to seem ungrateful for getting the exact help he needed, but one of the other astromechs would certainly be a safer option for all of them with this. Maptoo fidgeted as Ruby worked, then he finally asked, "Are you sure about this?"

CC flashed him a confident smile. "Trust me," she said.

He trusted her with a lot more during dogfights, so Maptoo nodded again, though he kept a watchful eye on the display while Ruby worked in case an alert popped up.

Finally Ruby whistled in triumph and sent a message to the display for the two pilots to read. The droid said that getting past the ship's security had not been difficult, a fact which concerned Maptoo and made him wonder if he should report it to their security team as a vulnerability. Once past the ship's security programs, Ruby had determined that the access interface to the planet Bilgan's public database was, in his own words, "useless and ineffective for their needs," so instead he had inserted them directly into a secure internal planetary database with read permission.

Maptoo was a bit stunned and didn't know how to react, but CC had no such problem. She beamed proudly at her droid. "Ruby, that's awesome! Great job!"

Ruby chirped at the compliment, then commanded the display to show the internal Bilgan database he'd accessed for them and removed his scomp arm from the console.

The display switched over with a flicker, and immediately they were faced with a menu showing rows upon rows of characters in the Bilgana language.

Maptoo stared at the incomprehensible words, blinked, then turned a questioning look to CC. She met his gaze in equal bewilderment.

Finally she shrugged. "Don't look at me. He's your roommate," she said.

Maptoo sighed and got to his feet. "I'll go get Sparks."

"No, sir, please, you misunderstand," the tarnished silver 3PO droid said plaintively. A spark flashed from some exposed wiring on one of his legs, causing his glowing yellow eyes to flicker briefly. "You just navigated to the study on kereckkian tree moss, which I do not believe is the one you had intended. You wanted the one above it that relates to light wavelength studies, did you not?"

After an hour of trying to navigate an entire society's information through a protocol droid, Maptoo's endless patience was beginning to find its limit. He exhaled. "Yes, Sparks, I did. You said that one's summary had something promising, didn't you?"

"Indeed I did, sir," Sparks said. The droid waited while Maptoo backtracked and accessed the correct file, then the Gran started slowly scrolling through the text, allowing Sparks to read it.

Ruby blatted, causing Sparks to abruptly straighten and whirl on the squat droid. "I'll have you know I am being *very* helpful!" Sparks said indignantly.

"Yes, Sparks, you are," CC said placatingly, though Maptoo heard the boredom in her tone. "Ruby, behave." CC was crumpled up sideways in her chair in a position that did not look comfortable in the slightest.

Ruby gave a sullen beep but fell silent again. Mollified, Sparks returned to the article he was reading.

About three-quarters of the way through the lengthy study, when Maptoo noticed CC's eyelids starting to droop, Sparks raised his hands in excitement and suddenly exclaimed, "Oh, oh! There! I believe I've found something pertinent!"

CC jerked upright, startled, and Maptoo stopped scrolling. "What's it say?" Maptoo asked eagerly.

"Tressiligat gna sottrettin, tnellist lrek tstrrt—"

"Basic, please."

"Oh, my. I'm so sorry, I got so excited I forgot to translate." Three small sparks flew from some wiring at his neck. "This is a study about the Bilgan system's star and its effects on the native flora and fauna, particularly in terms of the wavelengths of light it emits and what wavelengths the inhabited planet's atmosphere and magnetosphere allow through unfiltered. Naturally, the world's lifeforms have evolved with these particular light characteristics shaping their development in various ways. This specific section discusses the Bilgana people themselves. Most individuals tend to stay on their homeworld or on different planets with similar characteristics. However, although it is extremely uncommon, in their history there have been some spacefaring individuals who have reported symptoms such as a blue tint to the skin."

"Really? What causes it?" Maptoo's full attention was on Sparks.

“The theory is that it is caused by a long-term lack of exposure to a particular wavelength of light that is present in the Bilgan system’s sunlight on their planet’s surface,” Sparks replied.

“But...” Maptoo looked up at the lounge’s overhead lights. The ship didn’t lack for lighting in any of the areas Slurry frequented. “Slurry is exposed to light constantly here. Although...” This was a Mon Calamari ship with artificial lighting fixtures developed by the Mon Calamari society– an underwater society at that– and maybe adjusted for the multitude of Humans onboard. “What wavelength is the one they need exposure to?”

“Well, sir, keep in mind this is only one Bilgana scholar’s theory, and–”

“Sparks.”

“Around the twelve nanometer wavelength, sir. Their planetary system and physiology is really very unusual.”

Maptoo looked to Ruby. “Ruby, run a spectrographic analysis of the light in this room. Is that wavelength present?”

The droid whirred for a few moments, then bleeped a negative. A longer string of chirps and blats was translated by Sparks. “Ruby says that a wavelength like that would be intentionally kept out of the lighting here as it can be dangerous to many of the beings on board.”

“Does the study mention any other symptoms of this lack of exposure aside from the blue tint?”

Sparks read on, and after a moment he said, “Some experienced rashes or what seems like a form of ulcer. Muscle and bone soreness. Lethargy in some cases and hyperactivity in others. There are also reportedly some changes to an internal organ whose name has no Basic translation and of which I cannot begin to guess the function.”

“How do we fix it?” CC asked. “Just zap Slurry with a bunch of light at this wavelength?”

“Essentially, ma’am, yes, though not in quite so crude a manner,” Sparks said, continuing to read ahead in the study. “Affected individuals responded well to several sessions of controlled light exposure containing this wavelength. After recovery, periodic light exposure is needed to avoid further deficiency.”

“Which means we’ll not only have to get him some treatment now, but we’ll have to figure out a way for him to get regular exposure in the future,” CC said to Maptoo. “I’m surprised that the missions we fly in planetary systems haven’t been enough to give him the natural sunlight exposure he needs.”

Maptoo drummed his fingers on a knee, thinking. “Assuming those stars have the necessary light characteristics. And assuming the exposure time doesn’t have to be longer than the length of time we’re typically near a star in our X-wings. And... assuming his cockpit canopy’s standard transparisteel wasn’t filtered and polarized during manufacturing to block those exact same ‘harmful’ wavelengths and protect the pilot inside.”

Maptoo turned back to Sparks. “Let’s download this study and see if we can find anything else relating to this deficiency, like details on treatment time and exposure strength. Then I’ll need you to translate a written copy of the relevant parts in case Snubber, Mack, or the Medbay personnel need to see it.”

“Of course, sir.” Another spark flew off his shoulder, nearly landing on Maptoo’s uniform.

Maptoo grabbed a datapad, and the group got to work.

Even though it had been a late night, Maptoo was awake and sitting at his desk before Slurry's bedside alarm went off the next morning. Like before, Maptoo had noticed Slurry tossing and turning and getting very little rest overall.

The Bilgana was moving just as gingerly as the previous day as he reluctantly got up, turned on the room's light, and prepared to go on duty with some dark grumbling. As he was heading for the refresher and walking past Maptoo, the Gran said, "I have something for you."

Slurry stopped and grumpily turned to Maptoo, who held out the datapad with a highlighted section written in the Bilgana language displayed on it.

Slurry started to skim it in irritation, then he stopped and took a closer look. "*Trllini?* What is this?" he asked in a more normal voice than Maptoo had heard recently. "Where did you find something in Bilgana?"

"Just read that section," Maptoo said.

Slurry did, then he read it again. After the second read-through, Slurry held up one hand and peered intently at the skin. Maptoo obligingly turned on his small clip-on painting light and handed it to Slurry so he could get better illumination for his examination.

After a couple long minutes, Slurry handed the small light back. "I did realize not something like this was possible," he said in a somewhat small voice.

"From what I can tell, it's not common, but it can happen to Bilgana in your situation," Maptoo said. "There are a few other files on that datacard with some information on the treatment and how to keep it from happening again."

Slurry held up the datapad. "May I keep this? I should talk to Snubber about it after breakfast."

Maptoo nodded. "There are Basic translations of the relevant parts on there."

Slurry clicked his teeth together, already seeming to feel better with the prospect of a treatment. "I thought I was feeling just— what's that expression Human odd? 'Below the air'?"

"Under the weather," Maptoo clarified.

"Yes, 'under the weather.' Though everyone on a planet is 'under weather,' and everyone not is sick, so it does make not sense. Anyway, I did know not there was something specific that was causing my discomfort. Considering that this is probably knowledge obscure even by standards Bilgana, I imagine this was not easy to find. Thank you."

"You're welcome," Maptoo said with a toothy smile. "I need you to feel better so I can get my morning buddy back. You know CC's not a morning person whatsoever."

"Yes, I made that mistake once and shall never do it again," Slurry said lightly. He looked back at the datapad, contemplated it for another few seconds, and then took another step or two toward the 'fresher before stopping once more and turning back to Maptoo. He tried to meet the Gran's three eyes with his own four. "Places few very in the galaxy have files in our language," Slurry said conversationally, as if he was talking about the mess hall's dinner menu. "Fewer even bother to store studies done by our scholars. We are not just prominent enough. Known well not. I have tried to get into both my homeworld's databases public and internal times numerous to try to get information on events local and all the Bilgana I knew before leaving, and knowing even tricks some about the databases themselves, I have been able never to get past enough far the ship's software security to find anything useful remotely. Nothing certainly of this level." He paused. "If Snubber or anyone asks where this information came from, I will tell them I had it. I

do think not they will question my having files in my language native from my homeworld. Because I imagine answers other and accurate more may be not pleasant for anyone to hear.”

“You’re... probably right about that,” Maptoo said somberly. “Thank you.”

Slurry clicked his teeth again and continued into the ‘fresher, this time entering it and closing the door behind him. Maptoo smiled to himself and began his final preparations to go on duty himself.

Now that the concern with Slurry was resolved, Maptoo’s primary side task that day would be determining how to anonymously report the security software vulnerabilities that were so handily exploited and circumvented by a determined astromech, all without implicating himself, CC, or even Ruby in any of the aforementioned security violations. Otherwise... he wondered if anyone had chosen him in the latest iteration of the squadron’s betting pool for the next pilot to be tossed in the brig. Someone might have a few credits coming their way if they had.

Maptoo gave a soft sigh. He would miss the peace and quiet and stillness offered by the subjective early morning that was quickly drawing to a close. Already, the ship was waking up, about to plunge him into another day of unexpectedness and chaos.

The End

Revision A

6-5-22