

LC Genie was on his 5th bottle of Chalquilla when word came down that a mysterious fleet had appeared above Tusorix. Information was sparse due to the fleet's sensors being deflected, however, they had managed to pinpoint the sensor interference as coming from a small casino a few cities away. He sighed, finished his bottle, stood up, and sighed again. He knew what he had to do but he dreaded the eventual reprimands and paperwork that always accompanied his next action. "CM Solohan50, please report to LC Genie at once", he said flatly into his communicator. "On my way, G", Solo responded and was quickly in front of Genie's (relatively) towering frame.

"What's up, G?" Solo asked as he craned his neck to see the face of his commanding officer. Genie sighed again and muttered "This had to happen on my first shore leave in a year, didn't it?" before addressing the disheveled Ewok in front of him. "An enemy fleet has appeared above the planet in an assault formation but our sensors are being jammed from the surface. We have located the source of the interference and it's assumed that it's ran by this new enemy. Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to get over to the Rasino Coyale casino and stop the sensor interference that is coming from there by whatever means necessary. Also, the intel we have is scant, but deception and stealth may be required. Maybe go clean yourself up before you go over there?"

"Sure thing, G", the Ewok responded as he picked a flea out of his fur and ate it. Genie sighed again and wondered what he'd done in his life to deserve this. "One more thing, Commander. Why do you keep calling me G?"

"Sorry, G. I've been watching a lot of Bames Jond movies lately and now you're giving me a mission, it seemed fitting", Solo replied before leaving for the showers.

The freshly washed Ewok stood in front of the Rasino Coyale casino as he fidgeted with his clothes in an attempt to straighten them. "Finding an Ewok-sized tuxedo in the middle of a planetary assault sure was easy", he thought as he readied himself to enter. He did a little jump to grab the handle, swung the doordoor open, and was immediately hit by a wave of lights, sounds, and smoke the likes of which he'd never seen before. As he adjusted to his surroundings, the Commander saw a bar and made a beeline for it. He figured that if he could fly a TIE while drinking, he could handle subterfuge with a light buzz.

As Solo approached the bar, he noticed that an imposing figure was seated there. The figure was a large, silver-haired Wookiee in a tuxedo, a green and gold waistcoat, a tophat, and an eyepatch with a large, black cane leaning against the bar next to him. Normally this figure would stand out enough, but what really caught Solo's eye was where this figure was looking; all the other patrons at the bar were staring at their drinks or having lively conversation with their neighbors. The Wookiee, however, had his eyes scanning the room, noticing every detail, before settling their focus on the approaching Ewok. Solo was certain that this was the owner...and that he'd been spotted long before laying eyes on the Wookiee.

“An Ewok in the Rasino Coyale, that’s something you don’t see everyday!” the Wookiee exclaimed. “Greetings, my small friend! Tell me, what is your name?” he continued.

“50. Solohan50.”, the Ewok said as he hopped up awkwardly to get on the barstool. He flagged down the bartender and ordered a rum and cola, shaken not stirred. The bartender stepped away to make the drink as the Wookiee responded “My name is Drrlivvoogrooammash, though most people just call me Mash. Welcome to my establishment, the Rasino Coyale. It’s a pleasure to meet you, Solohan50”. He extended a hand for a shake, which Solo accepted. His hand was engulfed in the hairy paw of the Wookiee, who held it firm and stared into Solo’s eyes.

“What brings you here, friend?” Mash asked, as the bartender returned with the drink. Solo stood up on his barstool to reach over and grab the drink, making sure not to get his tiny coattails caught on anything.

“Oh, you know how it goes. We noticed some signal interf-----I mean, *I* decided that *I* needed a night out on the town, you know? We don’t have places like this back on Endor.” the Ewok said as he surreptitiously wiped his brow. “Phew, I definitely saved that one”, he thought as he started to raise his drink to his lips.

“A toast! A toast to my adventurous new companion!” Mash roared. He raised his glass to the Ewok expectantly and, as the Ewok reluctantly raised his, roared again. “Everyone, I said ‘a toast!’”. This caused the entire bar to stir and raise their glasses and, more importantly, caused Solohan to look around the bar in surprise. While his gaze was elsewhere, Mash made a signal to the bartender. As if they’d done this before, the bartender deftly tossed a small packet into the Ewok’s drink, which immediately dissolved. When Solo turned back around to meet Mash’s gaze, Mash simply yelled “Bottom’s up!” and chugged his drink.

Not wanting to be shown up and thinking to himself “A Lambda member never loses a drinking contest!”, he gulped down the drink. “This tastes a bit odd”, he said to the bartender, “are you using that NRC Cola from the Core?”

“Hah!” the Wookiee laughed loudly, “Get my friend another drink, on me!”.

Hours passed as the Wookiee and Ewok drank and told stories together. Most of the patrons had left the bar at this point and even the bartenders had changed shifts. Mash was looking visibly drunk and distraught as he yelled “Solo! How are you <hiccup> not dead, or at least <hiccup> drunk?! You’ve drunk more <hiccup> than your body weight in alcohol!”.

“On Endor, we ate the stormtroopers, armor and all. Once your liver has processed plastoid, it can process anything” Solo responded absent-mindedly, for his focus was no longer on Mash. A couple of hours prior, when the bartenders changed shifts, a Twi’lek female had started tending the bar and she was the most beautiful person that the Ewok had ever seen. Her headtails were long and smooth, her blue skin glistened in the fluorescent lights of the casino, and her green eyes felt like they pierced his soul. He was immediately smitten and was

oblivious to almost everything else. In fact, he was so engrossed that he didn't even notice when Mash drunkenly stood up, gathered his things, and stumbled away muttering to himself "How did the poison not kill this guy?".

Now that he was alone and had about 5 gallons of liquid courage in him, he had finally mustered the courage to speak to the enchanting Twi'lek in front of him. "What...what....what....what's your name, beautiful?" he stuttered out weakly. The bartender smiled at him and said "Tucnacol, though folks around here just call me Nicole. What's your name, sugar?".

"50. Solohan50" he replied, as he tried to lean coolly onto the bar top and missed, causing him to nearly fall out of his barstool. Nicole reached out an arm and helped him balance himself with ease.

"Thank you, Nicole" he said, as he tried to straighten out his tuxedo and look presentable. "So what's a gal like you working at a place like this?" he said, doing his best to keep this radiant creature's attention on him.

She tells him a long story of how she wanted to be an actress but ended up in debt with Mash and has to work at the casino to pay it off. "That fiend!", the Ewok proclaimed. "I had my suspicions about him, but it's even worse than I thought! Can I tell you a secret, Nicole?"

She gave a bemused nod.

"I'm a Commander of Lambda Squadron in Emperor's Hammer. I was sent here to find out why this place is disrupting our sensors. I already thought he was a criminal, helping the enemies of EH, but it's so much worse now. How can he keep such an extraordinary woman such as yourself in this casino? You belong on the big screen...or on the ISD Hammer with me!". He blushed, his cheek fur turning red as he finished that sentence.

Her bemused look turned to worry. "You're with EH?!", she hissed through her teeth in a whisper, "So that's why Mash was poisoning you all night! How are you not dead yet?"

"On Endor, we ate the stormtroopers, armor and all. Once your liver has processed plastoid, it can process anything.", this time saying it proudly and puffing out his chest to appear manly. "Ewoks are basically immune to poison".

Nicole's grimace softened, seemingly glad to hear that this little fuzzball in front of her would be okay. "If you're with EH, can you get me out of here? I've worked for Mash for years and my debt has only grown. He's never going to let me go. He's told me that if I don't bring in more money soon, he'll sell me off to the Hutts as a dancing girl. Please, you have to help me".

Jumping at his chance to get in the good graces of her, Solo replies immediately “Yes, of course I can help you!”.

“I’d normally need to clear this with Genie, but he’ll understand. If he doesn’t, then maybe he’ll find some roofies in his ‘secret’ Chalquilla stash”, he thought to himself.

“Are you able to give me any information on Mash or where his sensor dampening equipment is?”, Solo asked Nicole.

“Yes, I can show you where it is. Meet me at my room after my shift and I’ll give you all the information you need. Until then, go gamble or something so it doesn’t look like you’re following me home.” she said as she handed him a drink.

“Where’s your r---” he started to ask, until he realized that there was a note subtly attached to the drink. The note stated that she was in room 68. She had signed it with the name “Nicole” and had drawn a heart as the dot for the “i” in her name. Solohan quickly finished his drink, left a generous tip, and was grateful that the bar tab was in Mash’s name.

The CM wandered the casino floors for awhile, sometimes losing money and sometimes winning it. He even managed to win a big hand at the Tatooine Hold ‘Em table, despite a complete misunderstanding of the rules, by playing to see if he could make his cards add up to 21. A couple hours after Nicole’s shift had ended, Solo went to room 68 and knocked on the door. The door was cracked open briefly, then swung wide open as she hurried the Ewok inside and shut the door quickly. “I’m so glad you’re here. I was worried you wouldn’t show up!”, she said with a relieved look on her face.

“Of course I’m here, an Ewok always keeps their word” he replied, crossing his fingers to make the sign of the Cub Scouts of Endor. “Now let’s go find that jamming equipment and get you out of here...unless you had something else in mind?” he said coyly.

Nicole blushes and replies simply with “Let’s go”.

“Nicole, it’s so hot and wet in here” Solohan said as he breathed in the hot, moist air of the furnace room. “Are you sure this is right?” It was a big room but it felt small thanks to the gigantic furnace against the north wall. The heat coming off of it was nearly unbearable. The air was so thick in here that it reminded him of the Souper Trooper his mother used to make, which was a soup made from the stormtroopers left after the Battle of Endor.

“Of course I’m sure. It’s a hidden area of the casino, who is going to check the furnace room for a secret entrance?” she replied. “See, the switch to the entrance is on the wall here next to the

furnace". She presses it and a portion of the wall slides away, revealing a hidden staircase that leads underground. "I think this is where I need to leave you, for now. This is as far as I've been able to get, I've never been inside here before. I want to help you, but I've already taken a big risk getting you here. Promise me that you'll come back for me".

"I promise", Solo replies, once again holding up his Cub Scout signal. The two embrace in a tight hug, then pull away. Solo closes his eyes and stands on his tiptoes for a kiss. As Nicole leans down, a noise from down the secret staircase is heard and the two jump with a start.

"Please be careful", she says before running off.

"I'll try", he says somewhat sadly, holding up his Cub Scout sign for what might be the last time, and then he proceeds down the stairs.

At the bottom of the stairs, Mash stood with his cane gripped in two hands like a blaster. "If it isn't my good friend Solohan50. Or is it CM Solohan50 of Lambda Squadron? I'm going to need you to come with me" he said menacingly, keeping the cane trained on the Ewok.

"What're you going to do with that cane, pimp walk me to death?" Solo jeered.

Mash scoffs and presses a button on the cane, which unfurls in a whirl of mechanisms and gears until he's holding a Wookiee Bowcaster in his hands.

"Fair enough, where are we going?", Solo replied.

"You, and the rest of EH, aren't going anywhere" Mash said, as he pulled the trigger of the Bowcaster and a circle of blue energy erupted from it and hit the Ewok square-on, causing him to crumple the floor.

Solo awakens to a bright light shining in his face. "Is this heaven?", Solo thought as he tries to shield his eyes. "Who knew that Bowcasters could have a stun mode...and who knew that they give you a headache worse than a Genie hangover after payday?".

As he tries to shield his eyes, he realizes that he's bound to a table in the middle of a cold, sterile room. There are numerous IVs placed in his furry arms and legs, and he hears a chuckle from across the room as he struggles against his restraints.

"You know, I'm a bit insulted that EH sent you here after me", the voice states flatly as it gets closer. "I would've thought that they'd send someone with an ounce of subtlety, or sneakiness...or anything, really".

The light above clicks off and, as his eyes adjust, Solo sees the imposing form of Mash in front of him. "Why didn't you kill me? Are you expecting me to talk, to tell you all of our plans, all of our secrets? Well guess what, my CO is so drunk that *he* doesn't even know the plans most of the time and I certainly don't know secrets", Solo says and he struggles futilely against the restraints.

"No Mr. 50, I'm expecting you to die!" Mash roars. "These machines you're connected to are connected to kegs of the strongest Chalquilla in the known universe. One sip of this has been known to kill lesser men. But don't worry, I've procured more than a sip for you. Think of this like a Sunday brunch, you'll have all the alcohol you can drink and then some!". Mash flips a couple of buttons and the machines roar to life, pumping the purest Chalquilla he'd ever experienced directly into the Commander's veins.

"Now I'd love to watch you die a slow, horrible death from Chalquilla poisoning but, I'm not sure if you've heard, there's a war going on. Enjoy your final moments, Ewok" the Wookiee says disdainfully before turning and walking out the door.

Solo was unsure of how much time had passed since Mash had consigned him to his fate. It could've been minutes, it could've been hours. All he knew was that this was the finest Chalquilla he'd ever had and that it was thoroughly messing him up. Through the haze, he sees the outline of a figure get closer and closer, before finally turning off the alcohol machines. As soon as the machines are turned off, his vision starts to clear until he can make out the person standing before him. "---and then I followed the trail here and found you. I'm so glad I came back!" he hears as Nicole comes into focus. "Me...<hiccup>...too, you gorgeous, brilliant woman! Now get me out of here, we need to stop Mash!".

"How are we going to stop him? He's a Wookiee, he's armed, and you're drunker than three Biths in a band." she says as she releases his restraints and helps him to his feet.

Solo stands up with the assistance of Nicole, still wobbly on his feet from the Chalquilla. "I'm not sure, honestly, but we have to stop him!" he exclaims as pulls the IVs from his body. As he gets ready to throw the IVs to the ground and leave the room, he grabs them tightly and stares at them. They shift in and out of focus as he fights to remain conscious, but eventually his eyes focus and he follows the IVs as they trace back to the kegs of Chalquilla. "Don't worry, I have a plan".

30 minutes later, the duo have strung comically long fuses to the kegs of Chalquilla, but not before Solo has found a glass beaker in the room and filled it with the alcohol. "Mash said that this Chalquilla is the most potent in the universe. That means it's also the most explodable!" he says while wondering if "explodable" is a real word. "This will make him regret this day. Never

bet against an Ewok when alcohol is on the line! Anyway, let's light these babies up and get out of here!"

The two light the fuses and begin running towards the exit, but then come to a skidding halt. "Nicole, I should've guessed that you'd be helping this furry little rodent" Mash says and he steps out of a hallway, Bowcaster trained on the two of them. "If only you'd stayed a good, little bartender. It's such a shame I have to kill you now" as he prepares to fire.

"Little rodent? I'll show you who the lesser man is!" he yells as he pushes Nicole away and flings the beaker of Chalquilla at Mash. The glass smashes into Mash's face, sending industrial-grade Chalquilla and glass everywhere. Mash screams in pain as he grabs his face with one hand and tries to fire his Bowcaster with the other. The weapon fires wildly around the room, missing everyone but eventually getting thrown out of his hand due to the recoil. Nicole and Solo hastily run away, running up the secret staircase, into the furnace room, and then onto the casino floor. They yell "everyone run, there's a bomb!" as they reach the casino floor and escape in the ensuing panic. They're a couple of blocks away when the Chalquilla ignites and the Rasino Coyale explodes in a giant fireball.

The two look back to see the explosion while they catch their breath. "A Lambda member never loses a drinking contest!" is the last thing he says before the two embrace and passionately kiss.

Back at the EH base, Solo and Nicole embrace. They both have tears in their eyes. "I'd do anything to have you come with me, but apparently we're about to be at war again and there's not many acting gigs on an ISD during wartime" Solo says sadly.

"Promise that you'll visit me sometime?" Nicole says, wiping away her tears. Solo stands on his tiptoes and wipes away a tear for her.

"I promise! Promise me that you'll message me!" Solo says in return, his voice cracking a little.

Nicole nods and leans down to kiss the Commander one, last time. Afterwards, she stands up and wipes away the last tears. "Goodbye, Solohan. I'll always remember you", she says and then begins to walk away.

"Goodbye...", he whispers as he watches her walk away.

"I knew you were accustomed to breaking TIEs, but not hearts", Genie said as he walked up to Solohan50. "Now let's get going, we have a war to fight".