

[Juron Arc] [2] [The Knights] [9608]

Rev 1.1

General Wong was writing something on a piece of paper. It was a rare sight to see an actual paper and the practice of writing something on it. Nevertheless, General Wong wrote few paragraphs and drew his signature on bottom stylishly.

Juron was standing in front of him. He was standing firm with his hands on back.

“It is done,” Wong declared. “Your recommendation is done.” Having said so, he folded it gently and handed it to Juron. “All yours,” He said.

Taking the folded paper with respect, he bowed slightly. “Thank you, General.”

“You kept your end of bargain and I am keeping mine. It’s as simple as that,” Wong said.

Indeed, Juron worked for Wong for roughly three years. He earned his recommendation just. He could now join the Knights.

When he arrived at the Knights association building lobby, he was told that the Knights were away.

“Do you mind telling me where they are? It is an urgent matter.”

The receptionist glanced up and down on Juron prior responding. “What kind of matter is it, sir?”

It was urgent to Juron but it would not be urgent to anyone. In the end, Juron chose to lie.

“I am here on behalf of General Wong. I need to know where they are right now. You either tell me now or face consequences.”

His lie worked in his favor and the receptionist panicked. “I apologize; I didn’t realize...”

Juron pressed on. “Cut the crap and just tell me where they are. I haven’t got all day.”

Juron was told that they were at a private party held by General Louis. The party was apparently being held in a luxury cruiser in middle of a random asteroid belt and she did not know their location. He was also told that the party was invitation only.

Unlike Sol system where it was mostly void outside of Sol system, Andromeda system was surrounded by deep and dense asteroid belts around its system. The asteroid belts were one of reasons that their rebellion was successful because the rebels were able to hide effectively. Once the rebellion was over, mining companies established outposts here and there. And occasionally political parties were held deep somewhere in the belts as well.

There was a lone cruiser drafting in a belt. It bore the mark of Andromeda council. The cruiser was a luxury vessel and had its interior extensively modified to be suited for parties. Its cafeteria had been tripled in size and was redecorated for the purpose.

The party hall was moderately crowded and, among them, there was Wemer, Juun, Sevn, and Iuny. They were all dressed up finely for the occasion.

“Well, this is nice,” Sevn remarked and asked Wemer. “Why are we here again?”

Sighing, Wemer took a dip into his whiskey. “Enough with your sarcasm. You know why we are here.”

The Knights were invited by General Louis for his private party. Sevn was against the idea initially, stating that the Knights should stay neutral but Wemer decided that making connections would be better for the Knights to operate.

“This is a waste of time and efforts, I tell you,” Sevn continued on with his case most of which was ignored by Wemer and the others.

Several passing waitresses threw winks at Juun who was dressed finely in a white suit but he didn't return any of the signals.

“Enjoy the free food,” Wemer told Sevn who had just refused a drink from a waitress. “Go easy, will you?”

The cafeteria had a nice view to outside via a transparent wall. Wemer preferred staying there while the others mixed up with the crowd eventually except for Sevn who chose to stay by Wemer’s side.

“Come on, you go join the others,” Wemer said to Sevn.

“You are the one who would be joining them. You are the leader.”

Sevn had a valid point which Wemer couldn’t argue. Instead, he gave him a vague answer. “I will after watching the scenery for a bit.”

Eventually, an imposing man with a red cloak appeared walked into the cafeteria with two guards. He had a rugged face and others immediately showed respect.

It was General Louis. He walked to middle of everyone and spoke out loudly.

“Everyone, attention!” He exclaimed. Once everyone’s attention was on him, he continued. “First of all, I thank you for coming here today. I appreciate your support.”

He would then continue on his speech and start to mention his political agenda. From his speech, it was clear that he did not like Lord Arnkle and his agenda was to reduce his sphere of influence.

“I see why we were invited here,” Sevn remarked.

“Indeed,” Wemer loosely replied.

General Louis went on to claim that he was thankful for their support.

“Since when have we decided to support him?” Sevn muttered in a whisper.

When the general left the cafeteria, people’s chatter resumed. Most of them resumed enjoying the party. Unfortunately for the Knights and specifically for Wemer, they needed to leave as soon as possible because, by staying in the cruiser any longer, the Knights risked aligning themselves with General Louis.

Wemer felt that he must avoid that to occur which Sevn fully agreed. But it was easier to be said than done when they were refused a shuttle to leave at a docking bay.

“I am sorry, sirs. The general’s order is not to let anyone leave without his consent,” A guard said.

Wemer wasn’t about to confront General Louis and ask for his permission to leave. The cruiser was his domain and they were in middle of nowhere. Baffled, Wemer attempted to come up with a way to leave the cruiser. It was when a man approached them.

“Are you Wemer?”

Juun, lunny, and Sevn immediately became protective of Wemer. Noticing their intention, the man quickly continued.

“No, I mean no harm.”

“It’s alright. At ease,” Wemer told the others and asked the man, “And you are...?”

“My name is Juron. And here is something you should see.” Juron handed over a folded piece of paper. It was General Wong’s recommendation. Wemer read it through quickly. “You’ve come all the way here for this? This could have waited.”

“Let’s say I am an impatient man. Am I in?”

A very impatient man.

Wemer decided to tell Juron that they were in a slight trouble and explained their situation.

“I have an idea,” Juron replied. “I teleported to here from a shuttle. I can teleport you back to my shuttle.”

“Your shuttle wasn’t detected?”

“This is an asteroid belt we are in. Easy to mask electronic signatures.”

Wemer considered a possibility that Juron might be an agent working directly for General Louis and that the general was testing them. But he felt it was unlikely due to the recommendation. In the end, he decided to gamble his luck.

“Alright, let’s do this.” Wemer declared as he looked around to see if anyone was around.

Juron apparently parked his shuttle right on edge of his teleport range and was unable to teleport everyone at once. Therefore, he teleported one after one, taking a short break after each teleportation.

Eventually, he teleported all of them to his shuttle.

“We owe you one,” Wemer told Juron who was getting himself into a pilot seat.

Sevn complained, “Aw, man, this shuttle is a bit too small for all of us.”

Actually, the shuttle had a crew capacity of five but lunny was a big guy.

Juron quickly sat in the pilot’s seat. Looking back, he told the others, “Complain later. Let’s get the hell out of here.”

And off they went.

“Just in case you may not be aware, I am sure General Louis knows you guys checked in,” Juron told them while piloting away from the asteroid belt.

“I am fully aw...” Wemer was pushed against a wall. “lunny! Move please!”

“Yes, sir...”

“lunny! Move!” Sevn exclaimed. “I can hardly breathe in here!”

Meanwhile, Juun was calm as cucumber.

“I am fully aware of that,” Wemer was finally able to continue. “He may be angry at us but he won’t have a leg to... lunny!” Wemer exclaimed as lunny’s gigantic back started to press against him.

lunny kept apologizing and attempted to move away. “I am sorry, sir, but...”

“luny!” This time, Sevn exclaimed. “Oh, man. We gotta get out of here ASAP.”

The interior was getting hotter by minutes as well. The AC system wasn't working properly due to passenger overload. Thankfully, Juron's ESP ability solved temperature issue.

After four long hours of suffocating journey, Juron docked his shuttle at a random mining outpost owned by Red Plate shipyard.

“Phew! Pch!” Sevn stretched out as soon as he jumped out of the shuttle. “That was a cooking pot, I tell you.”

Wemer also rushed to get out and took a deep breath. Juun exited next. Amazingly, there wasn't a wrinkle on his white suit.

luny came out next and hit his fore head as he exited.

Juron exited the last and cracked his fingers as he left the shuttle.

Red Plate shipyard was a private company dedicated to constructing various types of shuttles. Their office was located on Heaven of Order, New Creg's and Creg's. Their shuttle production included luxury shuttles to military-class reinforced shuttles.

Shuttles were the only type of ships that civilians were capable of affording. Even so, even the most inexpensive shuttles started from 1 million credit and that was without any options.

The outpost was a private entity but due to its strategic location in the asteroid belt, its docking bay was open to Andromeda agents. The Knights were elite agents. Therefore, their docking was granted.

Wemer and the others visited the cafeteria and found mostly Red Plate workers having their meals.

“Red Plate shipyard,” Wemer mumbled. It was his first time ever visiting one of their factories. The company logo was seen clearly on walls and ceiling. The logo had a bolted red plate in middle with two hammers on each other, the left one looking about to hit the bolted plate.

A classical music was playing in background and the workers seemed to be healthy. All in all, it seemed to be a good environment for them to work within.

The outpost was built on a material rich asteroid. It was actually consisted of two parts. There was a mining factory and there was a manufacturing factory.

Wemer and the others were visiting the manufacturing factory.

“So, let us introduce ourselves.”

They gathered up by a table and Wemer introduced the others to Juron.

A fine, handsome, man dressed in an exquisite white suit addressed himself, “My name is Juun, a class A hyper human.”

Wemer advised Juun to conceal his true class.

A big boned and large muscular man introduced himself as he cleared his throat. He was almost 7ft tall. “My name is luny, a class A hyper human.”

Sevn was similar in size and height as Juun but he was blond unlike Juun’s brown hair. He also had blue eyes unlike Juun who had brown eyes but they both shared a similar European ethical appearance. “I am Sevn, a class A ESP.”

And Wemer introduced himself the last. “I am Wemer as you are already aware. I am the leader of the Knights. I myself am a class A ESP.”

Juron was overall disappointed that no one was a class S but it wasn’t unexpected because, to his knowledge, he was the only class S agent within Andromeda union.

“My name is Juron, a class S ESP.”

Sevn whistled and said, “Class S. Nice.”

Juron quickly added, "My specialization is ice."

"Yes, it was handy," Sevn responded while glaring at lunny.

Clearing his throat, Wemer spoke, "He is the new member of the Knights. He earned a recommendation from General Wong himself."

"Speaking of Generals," Sevn said, "What are we going to do about General Louis? He will find out that we somehow left."

"Yes, I am aware of that," Wemer replied. "But I don't think there are much he could do against us."

"I told you it was a waste of time and effort," Sevn criticized Wemer loosely. "But what has happened is just that. At least we got out safely."

From their short conversation, Juron assessed that the Knights were powerless in reality and he was disappointed. He spent 3 years to earn the recommendation to join them. He planned to use the Knights as his stepping stone but it seemed unlikely. He needed political powers and it was apparent that the Knights had almost none if any.

Quickly and silently, he considered his options while Wemer and Sevn were discussing their next act.

In the end, he decided to tag along with them for the time being while he'd seek a new solution.

The Knights eventually returned to their HQ on Heaven of order safely and Wemer successfully added Juron to the roster of the Knights.

Wemer was positive that General Louis would not pose any further threats but it happened a season later.

Wemer was on a patrolling cruiser. He had borrowed a small group of patrol cruisers from Andromeda royal navy to perform a patrol on his own. He also wanted other members of the Knights to get used to commanding ships.

He was having coffee in a cafeteria. Leaning against a wall, he was enjoying the view of space through a large circular window. The view wasn't as majestic as it was on General Louis' luxury cruiser but the view was still good enough.

The cafeteria was largely empty due to the fact that it was a military cruiser. Highly disciplined crews had a tendency not to dwell in recreation areas.

A man in a navy uniform entered the cafeteria and walked straight toward lone Wemer who, at this point, was gazing through a window.

"Excuse me, Mr. Wemer."

While staring through the window, he vacantly answered, "Yes."

"I am very sorry sir."

"What?" Wemer turned to face the crew. It was also when he noticed a gun in his hand.

Energy blasted from the gun. Wemer took the shot right on his chest. Being a class A ESP however, he quickly formed a protective barrier upon him. And in doing so, he made a crucial mistake.

His own protective barrier, which as in shape of a sphere, cracked the window while deforming, thus weakening, the wall. The cracked window shattered almost instantly and created too much pressure differential for the weakened wall to withstand. The wall started to deform badly.

Few crewmen in the cafeteria panicked. Disciplined they may have been but it was an unexpected event that would occur once every few hundreds of years unless there was a war. Regardless, they were trained for such an occasion and quickly reacted by dashing toward the exit.

Wemer on the other hand was being pulled out by the turbulent air that was being sucked out of the shattered window.

The assassin aimed his gun at the deformed wall and pulled another shot which blew off a part of the wall. Almost instantly, the assassin was sucked out to cold space.

Meanwhile, Wemer was hanging barely onto an edge of a wall. He was using his ESP to trap air around his body to sustain the cold temperature of space. Being a class A ESP, it would not mean his death even if he was pulled out to space. However, he would not last long.

“Ugh!”

He tried to hang on but his fingers were getting numb. He attempted to initiate a comm. signal but his other hand could not reach his ear to activate his comm. implant.

Two crews by the exit spotted Wemer but there was nothing much they could do in the situation. The ship’s mainframe would soon lock the cafeteria out and the crews rushed to leave the cafeteria.

When all hope was seemingly lost, he saw Juron teleporting into the cafeteria. He was seemingly unaffected by the turbulence and pressure.

Juron spoke to his mind. ‘Be calm. I will get you out. Just don’t let go.’

Wemer nodded in desperation.

Ice particles formed around Wemer’s body rapidly. The particles were cocooning him as well as covering the hole of the wall.

Wemer was cold but at least he was safe. He let out of a big breathe of relief while cuddling by himself in the ice coccon.

Juron eventually cracked open the top portion of the cocoon and dragged Wemer out soon after.

Panting, Wemer was on his four. “I owe you one. I really do.”

“What the hell happened? And couldn’t you just teleport?”

He could have. However teleporting required a good coordination as well as knowing where to teleport. Being new to the cruiser, he didn’t know the layout of the ship too well. He could have teleported further into the cafeteria but, if he did, he could have been sucked right out.

After calming himself down, Wemer explained what happened.

“Any idea who would want you dead?”

There was actually more than one who’d want him dead. He wasn’t exactly on good terms with Lord Arnkle due to taking over the Knights from him. And there was General Louis.

“My guess would be General Louis,” Wemer said. Lord Arnkle would have wanted him dead as well but there was never any attempts to assassinate him over the years.

“I see.” Juron crossed his arms. “What do we do now then? What are we going to do about General Louis?”

“Nothing.”

Juron’s eyebrows twitched. “What do you mean nothing?”

“It’s not like I have any authority to do anything, so nothing.”

When the Knights formed, they were to be a powerful elite group. They were to be the emperor’s, Richard Bau’s, personal inquisitors. That was how they were advertised to be.

However, as soon as they were formed, for some reason, their focus changed. They were still regarded highly. They still received high funding. And they were given a high tech HQ. But they weren’t given high authority. Wemer could still ask the navy for “favours” and the navy had been cooperative but for Juron that wasn’t enough.

The fact that the leader of the Knights was almost assassinated and the leader chose to do nothing about it because he couldn’t do anything pretty much summed everything up on how they were doing.

And the event made Juron to decide that the Knights wasn't for him. Even though he was still registered as a knight, he no longer reported in.

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