

Cities in the Sky

By ShadowSpyro

Submitted: September 30, 2007

Updated: October 17, 2007

This is the second time I've attempted writing this story. But I finally managed it with some of my already existing characters!! (Apart from Mouse and Roofio and some other characters who're completely new. >.>)

Everything (c) me (Amy)

Provided by Fanart Central.

<http://www.fanart-central.net/stories/user/ShadowSpyro/48814/Cities-in-Sky>

Chapter 1 - Mouse	2
Chapter 2 - Special Delivery	4
Chapter 3 - Rammorahs	6
Chapter 4 - Familiar Faces	8
Chapter 5 - Blasts From The Past	10
Chapter 6 - Sunken City	12
Chapter 7 - Reinforcements	14
Chapter 8 - Death From Above	16
Chapter 9 - Final Confrontation	17

1 - Mouse

"And why should I take you across to Rolas?" Virus grumbled through a mouthful of sandwich "Because," The small, disheveled looking rodent said. "Roofio will have my hide if he finds me!" He squeaked.

Virus looked up at him. The restaurant was beginning to fill up with the lunch time rush. He watched the mouse fidget in his chair, beady yellow eyes constantly scanning his surroundings.

"What makes you think that I won't staple you hide to the wall instead?" He said wryly.

The rodent looked horrified. He paused a moment, then rummaged about in his pockets and dumped a small, red velvet bag on the table in front of Virus. He put his lunch down and gingerly peered into the bag.

"Mouse..." He said slowly, as he pulled out a couple of coloured gems. "Where did you get these?!" He hissed quietly, quickly tucking them away, back out of sight.

"Consider this payment for last time. And for this time..." He paused, seeing the strange on the reptile's face. "They're real, honest." Mouse grinned.

Virus didn't need to know whether the gems were real or not, he just wanted to get rid of Mouse before he got dragged into whatever trouble he had gotten himself into this time.

"Fine. I'll fly you Rolas, drop you off on the outskirts and then you're on your own." He crammed the rest of his sandwich into his mouth, stuffed the gems out of sight and pulled his goggles and mask from his coat pocket.

He could get the gems checked later, and if they turned out to be fake, he could do a bit of Mouse in his spare time.

Mouse clambered onto the pillion behind Virus and braced himself for the inevitable. He hated heights, but he'd rather be battered by the incoming rain, rather than be battered by Roofio's Mob.

Virus pulled his goggles and mask over his face and kicked his bike into life. The engine roared, startling the people around him including the nervous Mouse. Before long, they were in the small band of country side that surrounded the sky city Hoomb. He opened the throttle on a narrow, disused dirt track that ended in thin air where the land had been eroded away by years of weathering.

Mouse tightened his grip around the reptile's thin waist as the bike was sent over the edge. He squeaked in dismay and surprise as Virus opened the wings and forced the sky bike to go quicker, making the engine whine horribly as the two after-burners flared into life, either side of Mouse. He squeezed his eyes shut and tried to think his 'happy thoughts' as the rushing wind battered him.

"Hope you're not gonna be sick down my back!" Shouted Virus over his shoulder.

Mouse's words were torn from his mouth by the wind and were lost in the distance, never to be heard by anyone.

The clouds started getting darker as the sky city of Rolas came into view. Mouse chanced a glance at the ground far below them and instantly wished he hadn't done so. He felt Virus speed up as the rain started spattering them, sending cold chills down their spines. It quickly got heavier, slamming down on the beaten looking sky bike and its riders.

They came in low across the Rolas green belt as the rain continued to pound down on them. Virus brought the wings back in before landing on an old farm track, spraying mud everywhere. He pulled over to the side of the track in the pouring rain.

"You're on your own from here. Now scram, I have deliveries to run."

Mouse slid off the back of the bike, grateful the after-burners had fizzled out when the wings were retracted and watched mournfully as Virus took to the skies again, leaving him on his own.

2 - Special Delivery

Virus' next destination was the sky city of Nort. It was the smallest city floating above Klaxis, but also the richest.

The rain was getting lighter as the clouds around him thinned out. He was looking forward to this delivery because not only was it his last, but he also admired the woman it was going to, not only for her eerie beauty, but also for her knowledge on ancient magics and technologies. Virus was yanked out of his thoughts by a distant humming. He looked about himself and saw nothing but blue sky with the odd cloud dotted here and there. His radar wasn't picking anything up either and he was sure that he wasn't hearing things, even over the sound of the wind and his sky bike.

The noise grew louder and he noticed a small dot in the distance. It was too small to be a passenger ship and whatever kept the sky cities afloat made no sound either.

Then he recognised the dot. It was another sky bike and the rider seemed intent on Virus.

He readied the two small plasma guns that he'd fixed to his bike after getting fed up by sky pirates.

The other bike was closing in fast and he braced himself for a confrontation.

He banked sharply as a single shot whipped past between his horns singing his scruff of blue hair slightly, and he circled around to get a better look at his assailant. Virus snarled angrily when he saw the other was Randal.

He was one of Roofio's underlings and was always making random attacks on Virus, even when he was on a delivery. But just recently, the attacks had been getting more and more frequent.

Another shot whipped past him, just barely missing the wing of his bike. Even under his mask and goggles, Virus knew that Randal was grinning evilly. He sent one of his double shots at Randal and cursed angrily as he dived sharply, avoiding the shots.

The two wheeled about each other in a sharp bank at close quarters, trying to knock one another off their bikes. Then Randal suddenly vanished from sight and reappeared on the otherside of Virus, taking him by surprise and nearly knocking him off his sky bike.

He whooped in excitement and was caught off guard as Virus regained his balance and pulled out his blaster, shooting his opponent off his bike.

Virus banked sharply out of the un-manned sky bike's way as it spun towards the ground below, following Randal and vanished in a puff of fiery smoke in a green field. He didn't really care if Randal had survived the laser shot to his side and the fall like he had done so many times before, all Roofio used him for, was for his piloting and air combat skills, which Virus could easily match or even out do.

"Bastard." He mumbled to himself as he resumed his course.

Finally the sky city of Nort came into view and Virus started looking for a place to land. He found an empty street just inside the city's green belt and landed. He rode into the city, gaining a few odd looks from the older citizens and some admiring looks from the teenagers and children.

He turned onto a tidy, tree lined street with large houses and expensive looking vehicles. At the end of the street he pulled into an empty drive way and pulled out a small parcel from underneath his seat and walked up to the front door, pulling off his mask and goggles.

Almost as soon as Virus rang the bell, the door opened revealing a short, stout feline, her thick blue fur spatter with black. She brushed her thick, black curls away from her face and smiled.

"Virus! I wasn't expecting to see you for another couple of days!" She beamed.,

"I got my other deliveries done early, so I thought I might as well get this one done too, so I can have a

few days off and do my own thing."

She invited him in and walked into the large living room, her thin, red silken dress flowing gracefully as she went. Virus had never been into Christine's living room and was taken back by the amount of strange, exotic ornaments.

3 - Rammorahs

Tribal and ceremonial masks and weapons lined the walls and small trinkets and statuettes were sat on ornamental tables, carefully placed around the spacious room.

Christine asked Virus if he wanted to sit down, and he took up her offer gratefully and sank down into the large, brown leather chair, thankful for a comfortable seat instead of the worn, padded saddle of his sky bike. He turned down the drink she offered him, not wanting to dampen his senses even a little bit, knowing that Roofio had probably become suspicious of Randal's sudden disappearance.

He watched the feline as she hastily opened the package and leaned forward slightly as she pulled out a crystal the size of a man's fist. It was a pale watery blue and had a dull shine to it.

"Rammorahs..." She gasped as she turned it around in her hands slowly.

"Ramm - what, sorry?" Virus asked curiously.

"Rammorahs," She said looking at the strange reptile. "According to some ancient texts, this crystal is the heart of a long lost city called Noxar."

Virus had heard the name before, but couldn't remember where. Then it came to him.

When he first met Mouse, he'd mentioned something about a forgotten, ancient city.

"Noxar? I thought that was a myth."

Christine just grinned at the puzzled reptile.

"If it is, then someone, somewhere, is lying and doing a mighty fine job of it too." She placed the crystal back in the pouch in came in. "Only problem is, that's all I know. That's actually all anybody knows. And the good ex - president, Lord Klarr of Hoomb is after it for himself. And apparently, he knows what it's for, but isn't telling anyone.

"I left Hoomb this morning with Mouse, and I haven't heard anything about it.

"I'm not surprised. He tends to keep these things to himself. And the reason I know this, is because my brother works for Klarr." She said frankly.

"Unfortunately," Christine continued. "If this crystal really does contain powerfull magic, or whatever, and Lord Klarr is after it for himself then he'll stop at nothing to get it." She downed her brandy and leaned back in her chair.

Virus thought for a minute. That could have been one of the reasons why Randal confronted him today. Lord Klarr had probably made some kind of contract with the mobster Roofio to stop all deliveries they could in a bid to find Rammorahs. But why he wanted the crystal still remained as much a mystery as what the crystal could actually do.

Then Virus thought of Mouse. That damned rodant knows something about this. He thought.

"I know someone who might have an idea of why Klarr wants the crystal." He said, standing up.

Christine looked at Virus with growing interest.

"Oh?" She walked over to him. "If you find out, it'd save us all alot of trouble." She kissed him gently and he left the house, blushing slightly.

Once he was back in the air and heading toward the sky city, Rolas, he started thinking about why Mouse was hiding and whereabouts in the city he'd be.

He was suprised to find that he hadn't been followed or harassed by anyone. He landed on the same track as before and headed into the industrialized city to look for the elusive Mouse. It took him almost a week of non - stop asking questions and searching old buildings, and was somewhat relieved to find him hiding out in the basement of an old paint factory.

Mouse was as equally relieved to see Virus, but his relief quickly subsided when the reptile started to question him about why he was hiding and why Lord Klarr was after some "Supposedly powerful crystal."

"All I know is that Lord Klarr made some kind of arrangement with Roofio so he can get back his precidency over the sky city of Hoomb by using it's magic, assuming it is magical or even the real deal."

Mouse said, as he picked at his cold pot of noodles in the corner of the shadowy basement.

Virus fidgeted, starting to feel uncomfortable in the small, dingy environment. Mouse looked at him, curious of the hybrid's growing discomfort.

"Problem...?" Mouse queried cautiously.

"I'm not good with these kinds of environments." He shivered as an ice cold chill ran along the length of his spine.

4 - Familiar Faces

Feeling relatively satisfied with what Mouse had told him, Virus flew back to Nort.

He told Christine what Mouse had told him and she looked concerned.

"We need to hide the crystal." She said, almost emotionless.

"But where? Roofio has contacts practically everywhere."

"Well," She said. "I gave up my adventuring years ago, mainly under the strict instructions from my husband. And as much as I'd like to go and search for this lost city of Noxar myself, my age is beginning to catch up with me." She smiled, eyeing Virus up.

"Wait... You want me to go and look for this city?"

Her smile broadened as she walked across the living room towards him.

"Okay... And what am I supposed to do once I've found this city? Assuming I ever do."

"Take Rammorahs with you and put it in it's rightful place. And I'll even pay you. If you succeed." She said, handing the crystal to him. "Even you must have your own contacts, what with all your travelling you do and your mysterious past."

It'd been two days since Christine had asked him to look for the lost city of Noxar and he'd been to near enough every museum and library he could think of, but finding nothing more than what he already knew. He had no idea of where to start looking for the city. Though something Christine had said did give him an idea of who to ask.

Virus stood up in the long grass, and stretched, deeply breathing in the scent of the field he'd landed in. He mounted his bike and rode it hard across the lumpy terrain, with Nort high above him, it's tallest building's shrouded in dark clouds. He took off on the crest of a small hill and headed for the Sapphire Ocean, where he knew there was a warp stone.

Before he could gain any real height, two sky bikes came down on him from above. He banked sharply as two shots whipped past him, just barely missing his right wing.

"frack!" he hissed angrily through his mask.

He opened his throttle and pulled up, climbing as quickly as he could for more height. He leveled off at about fifteen hundred feet and wheeled around, readying his guns as the other two sky bikes came back toward him, unwavering in their course.

He recognised one of them as Randal. Virus had no idea how he survived being shot off his bike during their last confrontation in the clouds. He didn't recognise the other biker.

He took aim on the unknown biker and was almost taken out himself as Randal excellerated close past him, long metal bar in hand, taking the reptile by surprise.

The unknown biker came at him hard, as Randal orbited them both at a distance, watching.

Virus let off two shots, hitting the unkown biker sky bike hard and veering away as quick as he could, trying not to get caught up in the explosion. He heard Randal's angry scream as he saw his partner and his sky bike plummet down to the grassy plains below in flames.

Randal came at Virus from the side and and rolled close above his head, swinging at him with the long bar as he went, just barely missing. Virus ducked the attack and came back around as Randal righted his roll, and let off two more shots, sending him back down towards the surface of the planet once again, his bike trailing smoke as he went.

Before long he was where he wanted to be. On a small, isolated island just off the coast of the Nort

Province in the Sapphire Ocean.

He landed and left his bike hidden some bushes on the outskirts of the small island's jungle, and started through the trees, towards where the warp stone ruins were.

He was almost there when he saw something emerge from the trees that made his stomach turn.

Doctor Rowan Allsopp.

5 - Blasts From The Past

Rowan stood looking at the green and blue reptile in amazement.

Virus eyed up the human cautiously, his clothes grass and mud stained, his long brown, grey streaked hair tied back in a tail with a worn back pack slung over his shoulder.

"What're you doing here?" Virus grunted through his mask.

"I was about to ask you the same question."

The two men stood a few meters opposite one another, watching the other carefully.

"I'm here doing some research on this little island." Rowan continued. " And no, it's nothing to do with the Prytchard Facility. After the deaths of Professor Hill, Doctor Smith and Sergeant Brown, General Har'mak had the facility shut down, and soon called off the search for you, Shadow and Spink. So, with nothing to left do, I caught a ship off planet and ended up here on Klaxis doing some research of my own."

Virus took a step forward. "How come then, I haven't heard anything about a lone human?"

"Because I've been on this little island for the past three years I've been on this planet, studying these ruins."

"Oh?" Virus said curiously, already fully aware of what the ruins where and what they housed when they still stood.

"So what happened to you after the incident at the facility?" Rowan pried, glancing at Virus' broken horn.

"I planet hopped with Spink for a while then put my piloting skills to some kind of use and took up sky biking here, making deliveries and running other jobs from city to city. Now, if you'll excuse me," He said hurriedly. "I some some business to attend to."

He brushed past Rowan, almost knocking the man off his feet with his spiney, whip - like tail as he trudged past.

"What's your business here anyway?" Rowan said, trying to keep up with him as he strided through the thick undergrowth of the jungle.

"If you really must know: I'm gonna make an off planet trip to see an old friend of mine."

Rowan stumbled into a small clearing behind Virus and looked around at the crumbling , carved stone work that was slowly being reclaimed by nature. Virus walked towards the center of the clearing to a large dias with a web of vines sprawled across it as if to protect the stone.

"How come I've never seen this place before...?" Gaspd the scientist as he slowly ventured further into the ruins.

"Maybe you're losing your hunting skills." Virus grunted, pulling some vines off the face of the dias, revealing a beautiful, complicated pattern carved into it's surface.

"This one doesn't go into your notes, kay?" He said as he checked his coat pockets.

Satisfied that he hadn't lost the crystal, Rammorahs, he climbed onto the warp stone. He closed his eyes and concentrated as a light breeze picked up around him. Rowan watched in stunned silence as the stone emitted a white light around Virus. Small blue orbs spiralled up around him before completely vanishing into nothingness along with the reptile, leaving Rowan wide eyed and gaping.

He reappeared on an identical warp stone, but in a completely different environment.

He was now on board the space station that sereved as the Shadow Stalkers' off planet base. He stepped off the warp stone and onto the thinly carpeted floor of the small room. Sat behind a computer - cluttered desk was a small, female red squirrel in coal grey and blue uniform, talking into a headset

whilst giving Virus a suspicious look over the monitor she was sat behind.

Then a grey and white Husky entered the room. He was wearing the markings of a Captain on his black and red uniform, and Virus recognised him almost instantly. Captain Reed Murc.

Virus pulled off his mask and goggles as Murc approached, slight amusement sparkled in his misty blue eyes.

"And what are you doing here?" He asked slowly.

"I don't s' pose it'd kill you if I could have a word with Shadow Ironclaw, would it?"

Captain Murc grunted and walked back out into the corridoor with Virus following closely behind. After ten minutes of waht started to seem like endless walking, Murc stopped him at the end of another corridoor that looked identical to the ones he'd just walked down.

"It's the door on the right at the bottom of this hall." He turned sharply and vanished through the door to the bridge.

Virus entered the room that Murc had pointed out to him and found himself surrounded by low desks lined with computers and several large book shelves, all of which were stuffed with various bits of information collected throughout years and years of exploring and researching different planets. Then he saw who he was looking for.

A dark blue female dragon with dark yellow markings in a lose black and green uniform was flicking through some old books. When she looked up at him, he noticed her left eye was scarred.

"And what happened to you?" He said, making a small gesture to her left eye.

"Got into a bit of an argument on the job a few years back. You?" She said, grinning broadly.

"Same. Um... I don't s' pose you-"

"- Could find out anything about Rammorahs." She cut in, finishing his sentence.

6 - Sunken City

Virus looked at Shadow curiously.

"How did you know what I was gonna say?"

Shadow grinned again.

"One of the two resident psychics told me." She nodded towards the door as a tall, armour clad white tiger left the library.

She grabbed a large leather bound book off a shelf and took it over to a table and sat down, flicking through the ageing pages. She stopped and spun the book around on the polished surface and pointed to a detailed hand drawn picture of a crystal in a small, delicate cage that seemed to be hanging from something out of view.

"I'm assuming this is Rammorahs."

Virus pulled the pouch the crystal was in out of one of his inside coat pockets and compared the light blue crystal to the black and white one on the yellowing paper.

"Definitely Rammorahs. Know what it does?" He said, eyeing up the strange text on the page opposite.

The dragon flipped the book back round and examined the page's contents for a few minutes whilst Virus peered out of the window they were sat next to, and at the planet Nuam, where the Shadow Stalkers' main base and HQ was hidden amongst the forest of huge red and black Glexis trees.

"Ah!" Shadow said, startling Virus. "Basically, Rammorahs is the main power source of the sunken city, Noxar."

"Sunken?" He said wide eyed.

"I can't figure out how to pronounce this bloody word, but I do know that it translates to 'Sapphire'. And the next word's 'Ocean'. So, apparently, Noxar's somewhere in the Sapphire Ocean." She shrugged.

"I know about cities in the sky, but not cities in the water."

"Well, you can breathe under water without the aid of your mask, but if you really don't wanna make the last leg of this journey alone, you could always go ask Chaz. He's got four more weeks off and is doing his fracking nut in because he has nothing to do. That, and if he agrees, you've got the extra added bonus of the fact that he was born on, and spent a good portion of his life on Corso." She looked at the reptile's confused face. "Corso's mainly water and the majority of the population live on boats and floating towns and villages." She finished.

The pair continued talking - Virus asking most of the questions and Shadow answering them as best she could - for another hour.

They both walked back to the warp room, talking about anything and everything they could think of.

"Wait... Doctor Rowan Allsopp?!" Shadow made a face, forcing a childish giggle from Virus.

"Apparently he's researching the ruins of the small warp temple on Klaxis. I told him not to mention the warp stone in his notes incase he had the urge to try and re-establish the Prythard Facility."

The Red Squirrel was still at her post behind a mass of monitors when they entered the warp room, and she watched as Virus climbed onto the dias.

"Remember where the crystal goes, right?" Shadow said as Virus fidgeted.

"Yes. And I remember where to find Chester too." He smiled.

Again the white light and blue orbs swallowed him and he reappeared on another warpstone inside the base a hollowed out tree. He climbed up the tall ladder, cursing his lack of biological wings.

When he reached the top, he stood, looking around himself at the massive black trunked Glexis trees of the Shadow forest, the fading sun light streaking through the high, blood red canopy that sheltered the forest below from the harsh weather Nuam suffered from. He made his way across the various bridges that linked the huge trees and up the several ladders that allowed the wingless residents of the hidden tree top town to navigate and move about with ease.

He walked into the tree bound bar and ducked instantly as a glass narrowly missed his head, shattering against the dark wall behind him.

7 - Reinforcements

A grey Ferret tripped over Virus' tail, and as he regained his balance, he spun around, snarling something incoherent and lunged blindly for the Reptile.

Virus lashed out with his tail, knocking the Ferret unconscious. He looked into the center of the brawl and spotted a slim male Doberman and a well built Lion KOing anyone that started on them with ease. Once the brawl had subsided, the two walked calmly to their bar stools like nothing had happened and continued drinking. Virus approached them and picked up a stool that was still in one piece and took a seat next to the Doberman.

"Hey Virus. What brings you to this corner of the galaxy?" He said, not looking away from the tall glass of red liquid he seemed to be studying.

"I take it you got bored..." Virus said, observing the limp and slowly moving bodies that were sprawled out across the bar.

"Actually, we didn't start it this time." Said the Lion.

"You may not have done Lenny, but you sure as hell finished it." Virus chuckled. " Anyway, Chaz. I was wondering if you'd lend me your help..."

Virus explained everything he'd done, found out and had left to do.

The vampire stared at him for a long moment in silence, before nodding in agreement.

"Alright. I'll give you a hand. I ain't got frack all else to do, and avoiding the General about this little incident would be very nice." He smiled, showing razor sharp teeth before finishing off the contents of his glass.

"Oh yeah, that's right. Abandon the hapless Knight to pick up the pieces. Again." Lenny grunted as more of the limp bodies stirred, groaning and holding various parts of themselves as they staggered to their feet, or at least tried to.

They warped back to Klaxis and were instantly confronted by Rowan. He was wearing a blood bandage around the top of his left arm.

"There were some people here looking for you."

Virus cocked his head at the injured man while Chester looked the wounded human up and down with curiosity.

"Oh? Who?"

"A Porcupine in a suit and an Alsation dressed in a simliar manner dropped by in an air ship and started asking me where you were. I said I had no idea and then the Porcupine told the Alsation to give me a friendly warning." He said, gesturing to his wounded arm.

"I'm assuming that they were these Lord Klarr and Roofio blokes you told me about." Chester said.

"Yup." Virus sighed, knowing that Klarr and Roofio were going to throw everything they had at them so they could get to Rammorahs.

Rowan looked at Chester curiously.

"I take it you're with Virus then, er..." He trailed off.

"Chester."

Rowan held out his hand. "Rowan."

"I know who you are." He grunted before pushing past the confused scientist. "Now, where's this boat you said you had stashed away?"

"Shadow's boyfriend." He told Rowan. "Not really someone you wanna piss off... I guess I'll see you

around then." Virus said and started walking after Chester, leaving Rowan in the clearing, amongst the ruins.

They eventually found a small boat hidden in a bay and set off out into the Sapphire Ocean.

Virus had never been much of a sailor and ended up hanging his head over the side, trying not to lose the contents of his stomach whilst the Doberman was following the directions the crystal's point was pointing in. Eventually the crystal started glowing brighter than it had done before.

"I think," He said thoughtfully. "This is where your hidden city, Noxar's at."

Virus gingerly pulled himself upright and brushed his blue hair away from his eyes as Chester put the crystal away.

" 'bout frackin' time, un'all..." The Reptile grumbled sickly.

A shadow darting across the deck of the boat and the sound of engines redirected their attention into the blue morning sky. They spotted several sky bikes and an air ship. Lord Klarr's air ship. Then several more sky bikes came down at them, appearing out of the sun, diving directly for them.

"shoot..." They said in unison.

8 - Death From Above

Laser shots rained down around them, some of the shots ricocheing off the small metal boat. Virus and Chester pulled their blasters out and returned fire, only injuring a few and killing one.

Virus felt something firmly grip his wrist and was about to lash out when he realised it was Chester, his eyes glowing white.

"Ready to hitch a ride?" He smiled deviously.

He pulled the startled reptile down into one of the shadows that were skittering across the deck of the boat and landed behind the owner of the shadow, knocking him off his bike into the ocean below.

"Next time, gimme a frackin warning before you do anything like that!" Virus growled loudly, gaining his grip on the sky bike as Chester banked sharply out of the way of another sky bike, making it collide with the one that was chasing them. Virus watched as the two bikes became entangled and plummeted in flames, into the ocean below taking their riders with them. He pulled his goggles down and pulled his mask over Chester's face, making the vampire flinch.

Virus took aim on the bike comming at them from below and shot it's rider in the face, the powerful shot decapitating him, forcing the bike to fall short of it's intended target and landing in the ocean.

They managed to take out most of the sky bikes. The remaining four fled back towards the mainland, and Lord Klarr's air ship vanished into the clouds. Chester took the battered sky bike down low and they both bailed as the engines flared into an angry red flame and exploded, mercilessly ripping the bike apart just a few metres away from where they'd landed.

Virus and Chester resurfaced and looked at the still flaming parts of the sky bike that floated on the surface of the Sapphire Ocean for a brief few seconds, before sinking into the depths.

"I knew you were a good pilot, but I didn't think you were that good!"

"I'll take that as a compliment." Grinned Chester. "And yes, I still have Rammorahs."

"Good. Now let's get going. I have a holiday to start."

They took one last look at the sky before disappearing beneath the surface. They both knew that Lord Klarr's ship was still there, hiding in the clouds, waiting.

They moved further down until the ghostly shapes of of buildings emerged out of the dim light, the windows and doorways gaping, black holes in the murk of the water.

The buildings stretched into the distance all around them as the lost city of Noxar came into plain view. A cliff rose to one side of the sunken city with large balconies protruding from it's face, their shell like canopies crumbling away as the coral took over. They cautiously made their way into the carved building, some species of the coral lighting their way with their own eerie glowing light. Various sea life flitted about them, curious of the strange new commers, whilst others just swam away into the darkness in fear.

They stopped at a large circular oppening in the wall in front of them, examining the carvings that surrounded it.

They look kinda like sharks. Virus said through his mind, looking at the Shark like people that were carved into the stone.

Maybe, Chester said thoughtfully. *They're the one's who built this place and lived here...*

Virus stuck his head cautiously through the opening and into the room opposite.

Dude! It's dry as a bone in here! And it's massive!!

He pulled himself through the large circular opening then helped Chester through.

9 - Final Confrontation

They stood in front of the large circular opening they came through, the water shimmering behind them, being held back by an invisible force.

Chester pulled the face mask off and as soon as his paw touched the top step, torches all around the chamber burst into white flame, illuminating the large, domed space.

"Bugger me..." Virus said quietly, seeing the intricately carved masonry.

Chester pulled Rammorahs out of his pocket and the crystal started glowing brightly.

"I think that's where it's supposed to go." Virus said, pointing to a small, golden cage that was hanging at head height from the domed roof by a chain.

They turned around to the sound of lazy clapping and saw a Porcupine and an Alsatian wearing diving suits.

"Well done, Mr. Morgan." Said the Porcupine as he pulled off his own face mask. "Even though you've managed to piss Roofio off to no end by destroying a large portion of his forces," He gestured to the angry looking Alsatian. "You still managed to keep Rammorahs safe for me, even under heavy fire." He smiled.

"For you? What amkes you think I'm gonna hand it over to you, you pompouse git!" The reptile snarled.

"That's no way to speak to your beloved Lord, now, is it?" Klarr said, faking hurt feelings.

Chester threw the crystal to Virus, who ducked out of the way as Klarr lunged toward the Doberman, his ribs cracking as chester countered him, forcing the winding Porcupine to the floor in agony as Virus locked the crystal into the golden cage that hung from the roof.

Roofio pulled out a knife on Chester, taking him by suprise. He yelped as the blade sank into his flesh.

"Consider this a warning: You kill Klarr or you don't hand over the crystal, I'll kill you and your mate, got it?" He growled.

A smile twisted across the vampire's face and he punched the Alsatian in the mouth, sending him to the floor heavily, tripping over Klarr as he struggled to his feet.

Roofio scrambled back to his feet, blood pouring from his nose and looked around him. He didn't pay any attention to the reptile and the porcupine exchanging blows, he was too intent on finding the Doberman.

He snarled in shock and frustration as Chester came at him from behind, shadows swirling about him. Roofio yelped as he felt the Doberman's sharp incisors pierce the skin on his neck, and became unable to free himself from the vampire's deadly grip. He whimpered as he felt his life ebbing away. Chester let him slump to the ground just as he was about to pass out and crouched down next to the heavy eyed, limp Alsatian, licking the drop of blood from the side of his maw.

"Consider that a warning." He growled quietly.

He looked up and saw that Virus had Klarr by the throat with his whip - like tail, the row of needle sharp spines drawing blood from the Porcupine's neck. He jerked his tail as hard as he could, wrenching Klarr's head from his body in a spray of blood, a look of desperation frozen on his face as his limp body crumpled to the floor.

"That's the most fun I've had in weeks." Chester panted happily.

They made sure Rammorahs was secured safely in it's cage before heading back to the surface with an unconsiouse Roofio in tow. Chester hid himself and the other two in the shadow of a cloud until they reached the little island, as their small boat had been sunk.

They handed Roofio over to Rowan to look after until he was fit enough to leave the island and go about his own business and Chester made a hasty exit when the scientist started questioning the small blood stains and twin pin prick sized wounds on the mobster's neck. Virus stayed behind and took Roofio back to the mainland with him and was pleased when no one asked about Lord Klarr's sudden disappearance. They all assumed the man had given up his bid to regain his presidency and gone off somewhere secluded to sulk.

Roofio started rebuilding his empire, but left Virus alone. Christine kept her word and she rewarded him with more than money and he kept a close eye on Rowan, making sure that he wasn't experimenting on the warp stone or had written anything about the reptile's last escapade in his notes, which he was grateful that he didn't. He still held little trust for the man, and was sure that he'd let slip of the stone's whereabouts and what it's used for at some point in time.