

Episode 22- "We Got a Plan"

I watched as Michelle slept. I wasn't stupid. I knew she was probably having an affair with the way she'd been acting lately. I didn't know with who. Jon...Hunter...someone new...all of the above. I didn't know and I didn't want to know. As long as I didn't know anything for sure it was easy enough to pretend she was faithful and as long as I did that I could keep my family together.

I pushed the thoughts of Michelle and her possibly affairs out of my head. We had bigger fish to fry. We had to do something about SPD to ensure they wouldn't interfere with our strike on Balassario's ship. Now that Cam had the blueprints for the ship we had a way to form a plan to infiltrate and get the crystals back.

There was no way to actually defeat them without an all out war that Balassario would surely take advantage of but if we could distract SPD then we might have a chance. That's what we needed...a distraction. And I knew just the thing.

The next morning Michelle and I dropped Harley off at school and then headed to the dojo. The Sonic Rangers were in school so we met with the Ninja Storm team first.

"We need a distraction for SPD...that's the only way we can ensure they won't interfere when we're on Balassario's ship." I said.

Cam nodded, "I agree...any suggestions as to what that distraction should be?"

"Yes actually. Michelle, talk to Tommy and let him know you want to take one more crack at a peace summit with SPD. This time hear them out and be cordial. The longer the talks take the less they are paying attention to what we're doing." I said.

"You want me to stay behind while my teams go on an alien spaceship?" Michelle asked indignantly.

I nodded, "It's safer that way anyway. Balassario took your Amethyst once. He could try again. We need to keep you away from him."

"I can handle myself." Michelle said.

"Actually Mich...I agree with Rocky...if we're worried about protecting you and the Amethyst it might be a distraction." Hunter said.

"They're right Mich...this is actually a pretty good plan." Tori echoed.

Michelle sighed, defeated, "Fine. I'll be the distraction.

"Good, then let's get to work on this plan. We'll fill Sonic in on it later." Cam said.

"Hunter, can I talk to you for a second?" I asked.

Hunter nodded and we moved off to the side away from the others so we could talk privately.

"What's up?" Hunter asked.

"You know how I feel about you...and I don't know what you are or aren't doing with my wife...and I don't want to know. Ignorance is bliss. That said, you are a good leader and more experienced than Rory. I need to know that you have his back up there." I said.

Hunter nodded, "Of course. At all costs."

“Thank you. And I know you’re very fond of Harley...remember she has a loving family and I don’t want anything to break that up.” I said.

“Relax man...I’m Harley’s coach. I love the kid but I know she’s your daughter. And for the record I’m not having an affair with Mich. I swear to you on Harley’s life.” Hunter said.

I believed him. “OK...thanks.”

“Michelle is yours now. That’s perfectly clear. What we had was special but it’s also over. Honestly, we’re barely even friends anymore.” Hunter added.

“OK. Well, thank you for what you’re doing for Harley. She really does adore you.” I said.

Hunter smiled. “I adore her...and I’d do anything for her. And I’ll do anything to keep both the Ninja Storm team and the Sonic Rangers safe up there. You have my word as a ninja and a Ranger.”

I nodded, “Thank you Hunter. I really appreciate that.”

Hunter nodded and walked back to the group. Maybe I was being paranoid. Hunter was who I consider...and most everyone else did too...to be the great love of Michelle’s life. If she wasn’t messing around with him maybe I had nothing to worry about.

I went back to the group as well.

“OK, so I guess I should call Tommy and set up a meeting.” Michelle said.

I nodded, “Yes. Get the ball rolling.”

Michelle grumbled as she pulled out her phone and dialed Tommy’s number. “Hey, sorry to bother you at work but it couldn’t wait...this tension is only serving to empower Balassario. I am ready to give this peace summit idea of yours another try if SPD is. I’m even willing to meet on their turf....You will?...ok, that’s fine...great...thanks...bye.” She hung up. “OK...on his lunch he’s going to call Cruger and set up a meeting if they are willing.”

“Good job Mich. I know that wasn’t easy for you.” I said.

Michelle glared, “No kidding. This better work.”

“Now we just have to figure out how to get the gems off that ship and how to return them once we do.” Dustin said.

“That’s another matter entirely...and one that I am working on addressing.” Cam said.

“Of course you are. Always one step ahead.” Marah teased.

“I’m going to head to my dojo. I’ll fill in the Sonic Rangers after school. Call me if you need to.” I said.

“Sounds good.” Cam said.

“You coming?” I asked Mich.

Michelle shook her head. “I have work to do. I’m going to my office. I’ll pick Har up from school and meet you later.”

I nodded and kissed her then headed out.

Michelle

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I really did have work to do. I went to my office. I had a small office/recording studio in Angel Grove for Starlight Records. It's mostly where Mina and I worked when we had things to do but didn't want to drive to LA. Between working on my next album and the upcoming show I actually did have a lot of work to do.

First thing I did when I got to the office was called Stu. Just like the original, he was producing the revival of the show. I discussed casting with him. While I was on my office phone with Stu I got a text from Jon.

"I'm in. Have your production staff call my management to work out how my episodes I will appear in." Jon's text said.

I smiled and replied. "Perfect. Will do. Love you." I sent it and turned my attention back to Stu. "Jon's in. Details need to be hammered out, but he's in."

"Wonderful...this will get everyone buzzing for sure. We just need to cast your teenage daughter and we're set for your part of the show." Stu said.

"I sent over a list of 3 actresses I'd like to call in to audition. We can hold open auditions as well if you'd like but I don't have time to sit in on that. I can make time to sit in on the final candidates." I said.

"Understood. I'll look over the list and discuss with casting. Once we settle on a final set of candidates we'll set it up with you." Stu said.

"Sounds great!" I said.

After I finished talking to Stu I turned my attention to working on the album. I needed to tour soon...but how could I? I really needed this SPD and Balassario war to end.

A few minutes later my phone rang.

"Hello?" I asked.

"Mich, it's me...I spoke with Cruger. He's willing to meet with you at 4." Tommy said.

"Will Charlie be present?" I asked.

"Yes." he replied.

"Will you?" I asked.

"I plan to. My last period is conference so I'm going to try to get out early and meet you there." he said.

"Alright. I'll be there. This is my last effort to make peace." I said.

"I understand and I appreciate it. But what changed your mind?" he asked.

"There's been too many people hurt by this war...and honestly we have the same end goal. We want to stop Balassario. That said, my teams are furious with Charlie over what she did to me. They will never seek peace if I don't make the first move myself. I'm willing to try. I make no promises but I will try one last time." I said. Damn, I really was a good actress. I almost believed that.

"I hope it works out. Truly. I have to go but I'll see you this afternoon." Tommy said.

“See you then.” I hung up and sent Cam a text with an update on times. He agreed to have the teams ready to go. I then texted Rocky so he could contact the Sonic Rangers and give them a heads up. It was on.

And so at 4 I arrived at SPD. Cruger, Charlie, and Dr. Manx were already waiting for me.

“Hello Commander...Doctor...Charlie.” I greeted.

“Welcome Ms. DeSantos. I admit I was surprised when your brother called me but pleasantly so. I hope we can reach terms this time.” Cruger said.

“As do I. Enough people have been hurt.” I said as Tommy walked in.

“Dr. Oliver, thank you for coming.” Cruger said.

“Happy to be here.” Tommy said, “Hey sis.”

I hugged my brother, which was awkward as pissed off at him as I was. “Hey bro.” I said trying to play it off.

We went to a conference room and sat down.

“I’ll be honest, I don’t know why you bothered. The facts are the facts and that is that unless you stand down and allow SPD to do its job then this war won’t end.” Charlie said.

“Officer Lopez, I remind you to know your place. Ms. DeSantos, Officer Lopez does not speak for SPD as a whole. We are willing to discuss terms.” Cruger said.

Charlie glared at Cruger.

“Our terms are simple...we will work with SPD but we will not follow any so called rules or regulations. A Ranger must be free to do what he or she must to save the world.” I said.

“Mich, the rules and regulations are in place for a reason. They were reviewed by the Silver Guardians and adopted for SPD Earth.” Tommy said.

“I call bullshit. SPD was not formed by the Silver Guardians...they simply had an early alliance and, might I remind you, in the end the Silver Guardians were swallowed up by SPD. Eric thought he could control SPD Earth and he was wrong. Eric and Wes did not understand the implications when they teamed up with SPD for an Earth branch.” I said.

“Wes knew exactly what he was doing.” Tommy said.

“Which is why he jumped ship early and left it to Eric. Wes has been working as a Time Force Ranger for years since SPD came to Earth. His work is unrelated to SPD. He left it to Eric and Eric lost control of it a long time ago. SPD used the Silver Guardians as a way into Earth and once they had it their partnership was over.” I said.

“I believe we’re getting off track here.” Cruger said.

I nodded, “My apologies. My point is you can’t expect Rangers to follow these rules and regulations. It causes problems that are 2 fold. 1) it leads to Rangers dying and 2) it leads to a totalitarian regime that is SPD.”

“Totalitarian regime? That seems dramatic.” Cruger said, “You misunderstand SPD’s mission if you believe that. We are no different than the Army or Marines.”

"That's bull Commander. You may have a put on structure of being military but you are not. You answer to no government entity. You are not held accountable to anyone but SPD command and SPD command answers to no one. There are no checks or balances. There is nothing in place to keep SPD accountable." I said.

"You're forgetting, we're the good guys." Charlie said.

"Maybe you are. It doesn't mean the entire SPD organization is. With no accountability you can't be trusted." I said.

"I understand what you're saying Mich, but they are accountable to other Rangers." Tommy said.

I laughed, "How?! They are trying to stop any non-SPD Rangers from existing."

"That's not exactly true." Charlie said.

"It's absolutely true and you know it." I said. I needed to keep the back and forth going until I got the all clear from Cam.

Cam

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Michelle had come through and so now I just had to get the Rangers in place. I gathered both teams at MS Ninja Ops and filled them in.

"This device will transport each gem you put into it back here. Once we have them back we can figure out how to get them to their rightful owners. Once all stones have been recovered Kapri will set auto-destruct on the ship. You will all need to get out quickly. Once the ship is gone it will either take Balassario out with it or at the very least cripple his organization." I explained.

"You all know what to do Rangers. We have a limited time frame so let's get it done." Rocky said.

Hunter looked at Rory, "You ready kid?" he asked.

Rory nodded, "We are."

"We got your back out there. Now let's do this..." Hunter said as I hit teleport.