

Motivations of a Thief

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Summary

A short look into Rios' head space while working with the Convincers in *Rogue Elements*. Everyone has their reasons for doing things. Cristóbal Rios had never expected that he would need to steal to survive. Fate has a sense of humor.

It had been two weeks since Captain Cristóbal Rios had obtained his ship, and now, his life was more complicated than ever. He'd been caught by the Iotians, who expected him to pay off the ship he had stolen. Taking the mermaid, as he'd affectionately nicknamed her—*La Sirena*—wasn't his biggest crime.

It wasn't until after he'd flown away in the vessel that he'd been chased down by a conglomerate with some of the most dated tactics he had ever seen. He'd never thought he'd be involved in a criminal enterprise and yet. . .

Despite that, the so-called Convincers weren't *convincing* anyone, let alone Rios. At least, not until they had forced him into helping them transport something he was sure they'd stolen. He wasn't a thief, or at least he hadn't been before he'd sailed off in the mermaid without paying for her.

Maybe he was *too* good at this— at the lying and making people believe he had good intentions. Did he? When was the last time he had taken honest work? Oh, right. He couldn't do that until his debts were paid. In order to make that happen, he'd have to beg, borrow and steal— emphasis on *steal*.

It'll get them off my back and that's what matters. If I take whatever it is they're looking for, I won't wind up in yeshivoo dung again hoping someone's going to kill me. Gonna be a hell of a story to tell Raffi if I make it out alive.

It would take some gravitas to pull it off. But hadn't he proved he could do that already? Hopefully, he could maintain the tightrope act for as long as it took to set himself free. He wanted to have something that was his, free and clear. If this was what it took to get the Convincers off his back, then so be it.

Better to ask forgiveness than permission, after all.

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