

STAR WARS

DARKNESS RISING

1-09: BREAK & ENTER

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Teron Sharr leads an assault on a remote jedi outpost. This is more than just an attack on the Jedi Order though and Jayk and Brae Udra must try to stop him from escaping with what was hidden inside...

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1.

“Master.” Teron Sharr said as he knelt before the holographic communication pad and bowed his head. “Speak my young apprentice.” a voice replied at the same time as an image of a robed and hooded figure appeared on the pad, only the lower part of its face visible.

“Master my scouts have investigated the world you told us about and confirmed that the Jedi still have a presence there. Their outpost is small and only lightly guarded.”

The figure in the hologram cackled briefly.

“Just as I thought.” he said, “Now take a strike force and attack the Jedi.”

“Attack?” Teron asked, “But the Jedi-”

“You said the outpost was only lightly guarded. Its defences should not concern you, nor should the lives of your men. Use them to get inside and take whatever you can. If I am correct then that temple holds secrets vital to us if we are to regain our rightful place in the galaxy.”

“Yes master. I shall leave immediately.” Teron replied and the hologram promptly disappeared.

The Jedi Order maintained small outposts all across the galaxy. Some were placed at locations significant to those sensitive to the Force to watch over them while others were just places where supplies could be stockpiled and repairs could be made. Many of the latter were a holdover from the days in centuries past when travelling between adjacent sectors could take the same amount of time as it now took to fly from one end of the galaxy to another and were maintained purely to retain the image of the Jedi Order as protecting the entire Republic rather than just Coruscant and the Core Worlds.

One outpost was located on the world of Veras, a cold and barren place that had defied most attempts to establish permanent colonies, leaving it with a handful of smaller settlements that often relocated as resources became depleted. The Jedi outpost was located in a mountainous area and was equipped with the only subspace transmitters and long range sensors on the planet. But these were of no use to the Jedi when the attack was launched.

Moving between the mountains the pilot of the modified transport ship unleashed a pair of missiles from close range that took out its long and short ranged sensors, preventing from bringing its primary anti-aircraft weapons online before the transport could touch down on the landing pad that jutted out from the side of the mountain into which the outpost was built and disgorged its passengers. It was at this point that the base personnel were able to respond to the attack with a small number of members of the Jedi Service Corps, drawn from the ranks of those taken into the order who had failed to develop their Force powers sufficiently to become Jedi Padawans or Knights, emerging onto the platform to engage their attackers. But Teron's strike team was prepared for this and one of them carried a flamethrower that he used to smother the Jedi guards in flame and their screams filled the air as they were burned alive.

“Move!” Teron yelled, waving his men on, “We need to get inside.” and he strode forwards into the outpost before the blast doors could be sealed from the command centre.

Inside alarms were sounding as the outpost's personnel hurried to respond to the unexpected attack. But despite being members of the Jedi Order and considered to be Jedi, the members of the Service Corps that manned the outpost lacked the extensive training that their more powerful brethren possessed as well as lightsabers to deflect blaster bolts. Instead they had to rely on blasters of their own and they were not well practised with these either, putting them at a distinct disadvantage against the career criminals who accompanied Teron. Teron also had one other advantage, thanks to the instruction he had received from his master he was able to sense the presence of the mildly Force sensitive base personnel in advance enough that he could order his men to take the lead just long enough for them to be the first to run into any defences while giving him the opportunity to take advantage of any blind spots exposed by the Jedi's reaction.

But his ability to sense the presence of the Force also gave Teron the ability to plot a path towards the reason for their coming to the outpost. Hidden away deep below the surface was a room that contained ancient relics that the Jedi Order considered worth keeping and these resonated in the Force in such a way that he was able to sense them. But the very fact that they resonated with the Force meant that there was a zone around them that Teron could not sense clearly, where his limited abilities were effectively blinded and as he opened what he guessed would be the final door between him and his goal he found himself confronted by a single figure.

“I knew you would come here.” the Jedi knight said as she ignited her lightsaber and held it up in front of her in a defensive posture.

Teron smiled as he looked from side to side at the collection of relics he had been sent for.

“Get out of my way and I will let you live.” he said calmly and he raised his blaster, “All we want are these antiques.”

"I'll die before I let you take them."

"Yes, I suppose you will." Teron said and he fired his blaster.

The Jedi reacted almost instantly, placing her lightsaber in the path of the blaster bolt and angling it so that the blast was reflected directly back at where Teron stood. But right as the blaster shot was coming into contact with the lightsaber blade Teron was already diving and rolling out of the way so he disappeared from view around the side of the doorway. Without him to block its progress, the reflected blaster bolt travelled straight on until it struck the wall behind where Teron had been stood. Teron had known that the Jedi would have the skill to deflect the blaster bolt in just this fashion and so he had chosen his firing position carefully. Stood where he had been he had blocked the Jedi's view of one of the outpost's high pressure coolant lines and the hit from the blaster bolt was enough to punch a hole in this. Suddenly free from being kept under pressure a jet of coolant erupted out of the hole and engulfed the Jedi, hurling her backwards and sending her lightsaber flying from her hand.

Stunned by this, the Jedi struggled to regain her concentration and by the time she recovered her senses enough to react Teron was already charging towards her. Seeing that her lightsaber was just within reach the Jedi reached out her hand to reclaim it but just as she took hold of the weapon Teron brought his foot down on it as well and she heard the sound of her fingers breaking.

"Now is that any way to greet a guest?" Teron said, smirking as he pointed his blaster straight down at the Jedi as she looked back up at him.

"You'll never get away with this." she said, "The Jedi Order will hunt you to the end of space and time."

"The Jedi Order is finished. My master has shown me real power." Teron replied before pulling the trigger of his blaster. Then he looked around at the contents of the room once more, this time able to take his time as he assessed the collection of relics that were now his and he smiled to himself, "Get packing." he announced to his men and then as he crouched down to pick up the dead Jedi's lightsaber he added, "I want everything."

2.

"You are repeating the same moves over and over." Jayk Udra told his opponent as they sparred. The teenager he was fighting against was not only his padawan learner but also his niece, Brae, assigned to him in defiance of the code that kept family members separated to prevent unnecessary attachment. Brae had an extremely high midi-chlorian count and as such had the potential to wield great power even by jedi standards, but she lacked control over this and all too often acted out of anger or fear. The council hoped that by pairing her with a close relative she would gain some insight into her family's history of service to the Republic and that would make her more confident in her ability to control her power, "It makes you easy to predict."

"I'm sorry master." Brae replied.

"Yeah, she's sorry. That's one thing she is good at." a voice said from close by and Jayk looked around to see a group of padawans standing behind him. Their training session had finished and although their instructor had left the training area they had remained to watch Brae fighting Jayk. Among the group Jayk recognised a trio of female padawans that he had encountered before, when Brae was first assigned to as his apprentice. When he had come to the training area to meet his new padawan she had just fallen victim to a practical joke that saw her being trapped inside a locker in the adjoining changing rooms and the trio had been the last ones to leave, abandoning Brae until Jayk discovered her.

"Your former classmates I assume." Jayk said to Brae and she nodded, "You." Jayk called out, pointing to one of the padawans as he shut off his lightsaber, picking one of the trio, "Show her how it should be done." *Surprise.*

The padawan obviously had not expected to be called out and she looked around nervously.

"Is there something wrong with your hearing padawan?" Jayk asked.

"No sir." the padawan replied.

"Then step forwards into the training area and prepare to defend yourself." Jayk said. Then he glanced at Brae, "Step back and observe." he told her.

"Yes master." she responded, returning her lightsaber to her belt and backing away as the other padawan stepped forwards and drew her own weapon.

"Begin." Jayk said, holding his inactive weapon by his side.

The padawan ignited her lightsaber and took up a defensive stance. But Jayk held his position, keeping his lightsaber lowered.

Confusion.

The padawan tried to assess Jayk's strategy, standing in front of the jedi knight and watching for any signs of action but all he did was move both his hands in front of him and tap the back of the one holding his lightsaber. The padawan darted forwards and Jayk reacted by dropping into a defensive stance but still did not ignite his lightsaber. Seeing this the padawan paused, coming to a complete halt as she tried desperately to determine what he was doing but Jayk simply stood up straight again and appeared to relax.

"Is that the best you can do?" he asked, "Two steps and you grind to a halt?" and he hooked his lightsaber back on his belt, "I may not even need this." he added.

The padawan suddenly rushed forwards again, raising her lightsaber. But as she charged there was the sound of a blaster shot and a flash of blue as a stun shot struck her hands. The shock of this caused the padawan to release her grip on her lightsaber and it shut down automatically as it fell towards the floor. However, before it could land on the padded surface Jayk reached out through the Force and summoned the weapon to his hand, simultaneously using the Force to draw his own lightsaber as well. Now holding a lightsaber in each hand he ignited both together and leapt towards the padawan with both held out in front of him so that the blades crossed horizontally near the hilts. The padawan gasped as he landed right in front of her with the lightsabers held close to her throat, just centimetres away from decapitating her. Then he smiled. "Your narrow focus is your weakness." he said, taking a step back and shutting off both lightsabers before returning the padawan's weapon to her, "You were so fixated on me you failed to see my associate over there." and he looked towards the grinning man now walking across the training area towards them, "Thank you Tylo." he added.

"A pleasure." Tylo replied, "Always happy to help out a friend." then he glanced at Brae, "Or two."

Anger.

"You cheated." the padawan said.

"Yes I did. But I still beat you. Easily." Jayk replied, "Now you have two choices youngling, firstly you can accept this lesson that if you seek to demean others then you may receive similar treatment yourself and move on or you can hold a grudge and see what reporting me or Tylo for using an unauthorised weapon in training will get you. See, here comes Master Yoda now." and Jayk pointed across the room to where a

diminutive green figure was walking towards them.

Yoda was one of the newer members of the Jedi Council, one of the highest ranking members of the Jedi Order and regarded as its most powerful with a midi-chlorian count even higher than Brae's. Many tipped him to be a future Grand Master of the Order.

"A dispute I must resolve?" Yoda asked, "Disappointed I am that unable to resolve yourself I am."

"Master, Jedi Udra tricked me into fighting him then had this man use a blaster." and Jayk and Tylo exchanged glances as Jayk did his best to conceal his disappointment that the padawan thought taking the matter higher would benefit her.

"Ah, see the problem I do." Yoda said he stared at the padawan, "Too closed your mind is. Play fairly enemies you may face will not. Grateful be that Jedi Udra your head let you keep. Perhaps from now on use it you will." Yoda then turned towards Jayk, glancing at both Brae and Tylo in the process, "With me you should come. An assignment there is for you."

"Of course Master Yoda." Jayk replied, bowing his head.

The Udras and Tylo followed Yoda from the training area to one of the temple's briefing chambers. These featured concentric circles of seats positioned to focus on a holographic display at their centres. More than a hundred beings could fit in each one but on this occasion there was no-one else present.

"A development in your mission there has been." Yoda said as he walked up to the display.

"More artwork by Thal N'Krey has surfaced?" Brae asked.

"No young padawan. More to your mission than just collecting art, there is."

"Our opposition." Tylo commented and Yoda looked at him.

"A Jedi you are not, but foresight you still possess." the diminutive Jedi Master said and with a wave of his hand Yoda activated the holographic display. Instantly a map of a star system was projected into the air around those present. This showed planets, moons and significant asteroids and comets but only one of the planets was considered worth labelling with the name Veras, "On this world an outpost we had." Yoda explained, adjusting the display to show an image of the outpost, "Attacked our outpost has been and all of the Jedi there killed, a Jedi knight included."

"But who would do such a thing?" Brae asked, "Who could?"

"More people than you might think." Tylo commented, "I've known quite a few unsavoury beings who claimed to be able to take down a Jedi. Most were probably lying but get enough nerf herders together and you've got yourself a recipe for trouble."

"I take it that some of the outpost's security recordings survived." Jayk said, looking down at Yoda.

"Correct you are, Jedi Udra," Yoda answered, "and most revealing they are. See what was recorded you must."

The holographic projection then changed from being a static image to a moving one as a group of armed beings emerged from a transport ship and proceeded to use the flamethrower on the defending base personnel.

"A flamethrower." Tylo said, "Not the sort of thing most of the underworld would consider using. Too unreliable and too much chance of something going wrong."

"But lethal against even well trained Jedi." Jayk commented, "They came prepared."

"Who came prepared?" Brae said, "Who are they?"

"A closer look you require. A closer look at this one here." Yoda said and he froze the video footage and zoomed in on Teron.

"Stang." Tylo said.

"You know him?" Jayk asked and Tylo nodded.

"Sure." he replied, "He's one of the gang that hired me. But I don't get why he'd be involved in this. He was just some street punk taken on as expendable help as far as I could tell."

"But why attack the outpost anyway?" Brae said, "What could be so important that they took the risk?"

"What is the outpost's history?" Jayk asked before anyone could offer a suggestion to Brae's question, thinking that it could shed some light on the matter.

"A long time ago was it built." Yoda replied, "The Civil War it dates to."

"Excuse me but I skipped history at school, along with most of my classes in fact. What civil war?" Tylo asked.

"Almost four thousand years ago the Jedi Order was split when a pair of highly decorated knights fell to the Dark Side and attempted to resurrect the ancient Sith Empire." Jayk replied, "A large portion of the Republic's military joined with them and by the time it was all over millions were dead and both the Republic and the Jedi Order had been brought to the brink of destruction. It started a series of conflicts that ended only with the Battle of Ruusan and the reformation of the Republic and the Jedi Order seven hundred and fifty years ago. This outpost must be one that was used as a staging post during the conflict." then he looked at Yoda again and added, "Which side built it?"

"By those Jedi who remained loyal was it constructed. A place to watch over those who fell it was."

"An observation post." Brae commented.

"Which means it likely includes details of the nearby positions occupied by the Sith during the war." Jayk added, "That's what they want. Anything that may have been left behind." then a thought hit him, "Was the outpost's location public knowledge?" he asked.

"Known beyond us, it was not." Yoda said, "All the better to conceal what may have been left behind this was."

"Are you saying that a jedi leaked the existence of the outpost?" Tylo said.

"Unlikely." Jayk responded, "It's far more likely that whoever else is trying to track down Thal and his work uncovered the Sith presence through something connected to him."

"To Veras you must go." Yoda said as he shut off the holographic display, "If allowed to find the Sith outposts these beings are then great evil unleashed may be. Stop them you must."

3.

The YT-700 class freighter *Swift Exit* dropped out of hyperspace in the Veras system as close to the planet itself as possible.

"Sensors aren't picking up much." Tylo said, "A few scattered energy readings but nothing that looks like a military base."

"The jedi outpost will have been shielded from detection," Jayk replied, "and the Sith positions will have been inactive for thousands of years. But we have the location of the jedi outpost and we can guarantee that it will have been placed close enough to monitor the Sith effectively."

"Okay I'm taking us in." Tylo said, guiding the *Swift Exit* towards the co-ordinates they had been given for the jedi outpost.

"Put us down on the landing platform. Brae and I will be ready by the time we get there." Jayk said, getting up out of the co-pilot's seat and heading for the freighter's lounge where he found Brae waiting for him.

"I felt us drop out of hyperspace." she said, "I'm guessing we're on final approach?"

"We are." Jayk replied, nodding, "The security footage we have does not go much beyond the point where the attackers entered the outpost so we have no way of knowing whether they are still there. You and I need to secure the landing pad as soon as we touch down. Are you ready?"

"Yes master, I am prepared."

Jayk stood by the controls to the access ramp and as soon as he heard the sound of the *Swift Exit's* landing gear extending he pressed down on them. This created a howling sound as the ramp began to lower from the air that was rushing past the ship outside. Tylo decelerated rapidly and Jayk and Brae saw the landing pad beneath them. The pad itself was vacant but even from up here the jedi could see the bodies of the members of the Service Corps that had been left where they fell by the outpost's attackers.

"Now!" Jayk shouted and before the *Swift Exit* even touched down he ran down the access ramp, leaping from the end and using the Force to control his descent.

Fear.

He sensed Brae's uncertainty about copying the jump but it was only when he landed on the pad and darted out of the way of where the *Swift Exit* would land that he realised that she had not followed him. Instead she was still stood at the end of the access ramp with one hand holding onto one of the pistons used to raise and lower it. Only when the ship touched down did she hurry from the ramp to where Jayk stood.

"Uncle I-" she began before Jayk interrupted.

"That is not important now." he replied, "You will learn to have faith in the Force yet. Now we wait for Tylo before heading inside."

"Yes master."

Tylo emerged from the *Swift Exit* just a few moments later, carrying a blaster rifle as well as the pistol holstered on his leg and wearing an armoured vest.

"Stay behind me." Jayk said and he proceeded into the outpost with Brae and Tylo following. Inside the scene was much the same as it was on the landing pad with bodies scattered in the corridors and Brae noticed that there was a mix of jedi and non-jedi corpses.

"These don't look like base personnel." she commented as they picked their way between another cluster of corpses that were riddled with blaster wounds.

"It would appear that the attacking force left its dead behind." Jayk replied.

"But we could identify them." Brae said.

"So what?" Tylo asked, "Most likely every last one of these was considered expendable and can't be linked to Morton or his employer." then he paused for a moment before he added, "So where are we heading anyway? I thought we'd head up to a command centre or something."

"The most vital areas of the outpost are located on the lower levels." Jayk answered, "That is where the relics gathered while the outpost was being used to spy on the Sith will have been collected as well as being where the main computer is backed up to. If any recordings other than those on the landing pad did manage to survive then that is where we shall find them."

The most prominent feature of the records chamber was the body on the floor that wore the robes of a jedi knight rather than the coveralls of the members of the Service Corps that had been strewn in the corridors elsewhere in the outpost.

"Did you know her?" Tylo asked when he noticed Jayk staring at the corpse.

"No." the jedi replied, shaking his head, "But whoever she was she died protecting whatever was in this room." and then he looked around at the empty shelves.

"The stuff wasn't locked away then?" Tylo said.

"Why bother?" Brae responded, "No-one was supposed to be able to get in here."

"Well how about we find out what was taken and see if we can catch up to that nerf herder Teron?" Tylo suggested, "Then maybe he can tell us where to find Morton."

From inside his robes Jayk produced a small crystalline cube and looked at it.

"Cal." he said and almost immediately a hologram of another man in Jedi robes materialised in front of him.

"I'm guessing you want me to access the outpost computer?" Cal Udra asked. Almost four thousand years earlier Cal Udra had been a Jedi knight who was assigned his younger sister as his padawan and the council had come to the conclusion that the experiences he had recorded in his holocron could benefit both Jayk and Brae as he trained his niece in the Jedi arts. However, as well as consulting Cal for advice on training Brae, Jayk had come to realise that the nature of the holocron's artificial intelligence had other benefits as well and Cal was able to access many computer networks using the wireless communication port that the original Cal Udra had built into the device so many centuries earlier.

"Correct." Jayk replied, "I want any security recordings that were made but not transmitted back to the Jedi temple as well as everything you can find regarding the early history of this outpost and the inventory of relics kept here."

"Okay, I'll see what there is." Cal said and the hologram gave the appearance of pausing to concentrate before frowning.

"What's wrong?" Brae asked.

"The computer's not working is it?" Tylo added.

"No it's not." Cal replied, "In fact I think someone's removed the drives used for making backups entirely."

"Master, could the Jedi here have removed the drives to keep them out of the hands of their attackers?" Brae asked.

"We cannot afford to think that my young apprentice." Jayk answered, "So given that we cannot easily determine the location of the Sith positions this outpost was created to observe and head straight there we must instead hunt for them ourselves."

"They could be anywhere. Even three or four thousand years ago surveillance technology would allow a place like this to see for several kilometres all around." Tylo pointed out.

"Not necessarily." Cal commented, "Remember I, or rather the original me, fought in the war. I was one of the few to survive it."

"Any knowledge you can provide will be welcomed." Jayk said.

"Well let's start off with the fact that this facility is built into the side of a mountain. That tells you that the Sith were on the other side. The Jedi put this place here so it wouldn't be seen by any Sith patrols before they saw the Sith." Cal explained and Jayk looked at Brae.

"That may be enough for us." he said.

"How?" Tylo asked.

"We'll be able to sense the Jedi relics if we get close enough." Brae replied, "And knowing which way to go ought to help us get that close."

"Plus we'll have aerial surveillance." Jayk added, looking directly at Tylo. Then he looked Cal, "I assume you'll be able to help him with that?" he added and Cal's hologram gave the appearance of nodding.

"I can interface with the *Swift Exit's* sensors, yes. But I won't be able to detect activity far from my holocron myself."

"That shouldn't matter." Jayk said, "Tylo can carry out a visual search of the ground while you keep watch for the ship that brought the raiders here. I doubt it or they will have gone far."

Teron lowered the macrobinoculars he was using to survey the ground ahead. All around him were mountains and as such his field of view was somewhat limited. The uneven terrain also made travel by foot tiring and already some of his men had started to question why they shouldn't just call for their ship to collect them and the heavy crates of items they had stolen from the Jedi outpost. There had been considerable surprise from many of his men when Teron had ordered it away as soon as the outpost had been secured but before it had been looted. But Teron had known that a distress call had been sent and could not rely on it taking long enough for reinforcements to arrive that his mission here could be completed. Instead the transport was concealed some distance away and would be summoned only when Teron was ready to leave. "Because it's worthless junk!" Teron snapped, "Nothing but trinkets that we can sell for money. The real treasure still lies buried under the stone and rubble left behind by a Republic bombardment and if any of you think you can back out now then I can leave you here under a pile of rocks all of your own."

Double checking his datapad first, Teron then continued towards the location where the Jedi records indicated that the largest of the network of Sith outposts in this area had been located. According to his master, the outposts had been connected together by a network of tunnels converging here that may have survived the bombardment that the area had been subjected to. Therefore, even if there was nothing left of interest in the primary outpost then reaching the others would be more straightforward.

His outburst quieted most of the grumbling from his men, they had all witnessed examples of his anger since he took control of the gang and none of them wanted to become its next target. Despite this intimidation their

progress remained slow thanks to several of their number being weighed down by what they had already stolen and during the periods where he was forced to wait for them to catch up Teron used the time to recheck the map on his datapad against the terrain around him. Over the centuries there had been changes in some of the topography that meant there was a risk of getting lost but enough remained the same that Teron was able to stay on course until they reached a narrow fissure in the ground.

"Now what?" one of his men asked as they all stared at the fissure blocking their current path between two steep rock faces, "We might be able to get across with lines but those crates won't be so easy to move."

"I find your lack of faith disturbing." Teron responded without looking at the man, "We aren't going across."

"We aren't? Then where are we going? Because back tracking and looking for another way around could cost us several hours."

"We're going down." Teron said and only then did he look up to see the confused expression on the other man's face, "What did you expect? A pyramid carved out of a mountain for the entire galaxy to see? The Sith were wise and they built their places of power where they could be hidden from view. At one time there would have been a concealed entrance somewhere around here on the surface, but now this is the only way in." and then he produced a syntherope dispenser and began to unravel a length.

4.

"Over here!" Jayk called out, crouching down to study the ground at his feet, "They definitely came this way. At least a dozen of them. Some laden down with something heavy."

"The relics stolen from the outpost?" Brae suggested as she joined him in studying the tracks he had discovered.

"Most likely yes and that means that they'll be moving slowly. Hopefully slow enough for us to catch up with." Jayk said and he took out his comlink, "*Swift Exit* do you read me?" he signalled.

"I read you." Tylo replied.

"We read you." Cal's voice added, "Though you're breaking up somewhat. The mountains must be interfering with your transmission."

"Understood. We've found tracks leading in the direction you gave us. Have you seen anything up there?"

"Not yet. Looks like we're the only thing flying right now." Cal answered.

"No sign of activity on the ground either." Tylo added, "These mountains don't exactly make this easy."

"I understand." Jayk said, "But we've got a trail to follow now so I want you to concentrate on finding that transport. If we can cut off their way off this world then so much the better."

"Copy that. There's a settlement about twenty kilometres from here. Maybe they've seen something." Tylo said and he turned the *Swift Exit* towards the settlement, leaving the two jedi to track Teron's force on the ground.

It did not take long for the *Swift Exit* to cover the distance to the settlement and when it was still several kilometres distant Cal's eyes widened.

"We've got a contact." he said.

"Where? I don't see anything." Tylo replied as he searched the skies outside.

"On the ground. Doesn't look like we're the first ones to be stopping off here today." Cal told him.

"Okay I'm taking us down here. I won't land just yet but I'll keep us low until we're within about two kilometres and proceed on foot."

"Nice." Cal said, "Sneak up on them."

"Yeah, well I'm guessing that given how rarely this planet gets visitors the crew of that ship are bound to connect any further arrivals to the Jedi Order and I'd rather keep that to myself as long as possible."

Tylo landed the *Swift Exit* some distance outside of the settlement but not so far away that he could not walk the rest of the way. Unsure of what he might be facing he took his armoured vest along with him, though he concealed this beneath a long coat that also served to protect him from the elements of Veras. The settlement had been set up on a wide flat plain and unlike in the more mountainous regions the wind kicked up a significant amount of dust that forced Tylo to don a pair of goggles and wrap a scarf around his face as well to prevent this from getting into his eyes, nose and mouth. An added advantage of this from Tylo's point of view was that should any of the members of the gang present in the settlement be among those he had met before then they would be unlikely to recognise him before he recognised them.

When it came into view the settlement consisted of a number of tented structures erected around a pen containing a number of banthas. The wind and dust in the air did not seem to bother the creatures as they munched on bails of fodder left in the pen for them. But more significant than the settlement was the shape just barely visible through the dust storm located just beyond a cluster of tents.

It was the unmistakable outline of the transport that had delivered the raiders to the jedi outpost.

Tylo headed straight for the transport, not bothering to try and disguise his route. The vessel appeared to be sealed up tight, not surprising given the current conditions and no light shone through any of its windows to indicate that anyone was inside. The dust storm had long since erased any tracks that may have been left by the pilot but Tylo had another idea of how to find them.

"Hey!" he shouted out to a figure just about visible nearby.

"What?" came the reply.

"Where can a guy who's just walked through this poodoo get a drink around here?"

The other man pointed Tylo towards a nearby tent that was larger than many of the others and Tylo nodded in gratitude before making his way towards it. There were two separate tent flaps that he needed to move aside in order to enter the tent, forming a very crude form of air lock that helped to keep the dust out of the inside. This was not one hundred percent effective though since anyone entering invariably brought some of it in with them and there was a layer of dust on the floor already as Tylo brushed it off himself.

As far as he could tell no-one paid him any attention as he entered and as he searched through the crowd for anyone who looked to stand out he noticed that the overwhelming majority of the tent's occupants were openly armed with a variety of battered looking weapons.

The bar consisted of a sheet metal counter behind which were rows of bottles on shelves as well as a

number of larger barrels on the floor and when Tylo reached it a woman whose age was difficult to determine given the scarring on her face approached him.

"What can I get you?" she asked as Tylo lowered the scarf from his face but left the goggles in place to hide his identity.

"Do you take Republic Dataries?" he asked.

"Cash?"

"Cash. Not electronic."

"Yeah, I'll take them. But I'll have to charge extra to account for the difficulty in moving them on again."

"So how much for a beer?"

"Twenty."

Tylo flinched at this, the price was ridiculously expensive but he knew that he had little choice but to pay it and he took a coin from his pocket that he placed on the counter as the woman got him his drink. It was not the best beer he had ever tasted and it was served at room temperature but it was not the worst either and he gulped down about half the contents of the cup before lowering it.

"I spotted a ship on the outskirts of town." Tylo said to the woman behind the bar, "Is that here often?"

"No, you're not the only visitor from off world we've had today."

"Is he here for anything special?"

"Dunno. Try asking him yourself. He's right over there." and the woman pointed across the tent to where a man sat alone eating a meal. Like Tylo his clothes did not match the heavily patched and repaired style that many of the natives wore.

"Thanks." Tylo replied and he picked up his cup and headed towards the man sat at the table. As he neared the man he studied him carefully, trying to place him. But whoever the man was Tylo could not recall having ever seen him before and this allowed him to risk lifting his goggles to provide him with a better view, "I hear you have a ship." he said, sitting down opposite the man.

"It's not for hire." the man replied without bothering to look up from his meal.

"Hey look, I'm not interested in hiring the whole ship." Tylo said, "I just want to book passage when you leave here. Where are you headed?"

"Nowhere of interest to you. Now kriff off." the man said.

"How rude." Tylo commented as he stood back up and headed back towards the bar to wait for the pilot to get up.

As it happened he did not have to wait for long. As soon as the pilot finished his meal he got up from the table and headed for the exit. Like Tylo he put on a pair of goggles and pulled a scarf across his face for protection. Tylo donned his own protection on his way out of the tent as well and as soon as he was outside he looked around to see the pilot heading back towards the transport and Tylo duly followed. As they neared the transport Tylo reached under his coat for his blaster and held the weapon at his side as he waited for the pilot to open the hatch to the transport. Then as soon as he heard the 'hiss' as the hatch began to slide open he raised the weapon and shot the man in the back.

"Should have just offered me a ride." he said, returning the blaster to its holster before reaching forwards to drag the body into the ship before anyone could come to investigate the shot.

No-one had been inside the ancient Sith complex that lay at the bottom of the fissure for thousands of years and its internal systems had long since ceased functioning, meaning that Teron and his men had to use their own glow rods to light their way and to force open any closed hatchway that barred their path. There were few of these however, the Jedi had done their best to pick the place clean following their victory and had not bothered about closing doors behind them. This of course meant that what dust had been able to get inside, carried down the fissure by the wind had been able to scatter over a considerable area and in places fungal growths had sprouted. Despite this though, the way was reasonably clear and the group encountered nothing more menacing than the odd nest of small insects. At least that was until Teron came to a sudden halt and gasped.

"What's wrong?" one of his men asked.

"They're here." Teron responded.

"It would seem that the Sith outpost is underground." Jayk said as he crouched down beside the fissure and looked over the edge. The tracks led right up to this point and then disappeared, while several synthrope lines had been left dangling down into the fissure where they disappeared in the darkness below.

"Uncle, I don't feel well." Brae said and when Jayk looked around he saw her swaying from side to side as she tried to keep her balance.

"Brae, sit down." he said, rushing to her side and helping her to sit down on a nearby rock, "What can you sense?" Brae had had a similar reaction to being in close proximity to a Sith tomb several weeks earlier but that had been mild in comparison to this and Jayk hoped it meant that she could provide some information on what might be below them.

"Something alive, yet not." she replied, "I don't understand. It feels – feels unnatural."

"Something missed by the jedi who attacked this place." Jayk said. Whatever was causing this distress to Brae, he was unable to sense it and it was not unreasonable that the jedi of the Civil War could have missed it as well, especially if they had been in a hurry to move on to the next stage of a campaign, "Here, have something to drink. We can rest for a few minutes but we need to continue." he added and he handed a small flask of water to Brae.

"Thank you." she replied before taking a few sips. Then she handed the flask back and got back to her feet, steadying herself on Jayk.

"Are you okay to continue?" he asked.

"I think so." Brae replied, but Jayk remained unconvinced.

"Come with me." he told her, leading her to the edge of the fissure and unravelling a length of syntherope that he proceeded to tie around Brae's waist. But rather than secure it to the ground so she could climb down the fissure he then began to tie it around himself so they were secured together.

"Master, what are you doing?" she said.

"Getting ready to carry you down there." he replied, "The syntherope left by the raiders ought to be strong enough to bear both our weights and I don't want to risk losing you just because you slipped owing to a lapse in concentration. Now I need you to wrap your arms around me while we descend. Oh and you'll have to hold our glow rod as well, I'll have my hands full."

With Brae clinging tightly onto him Jayk lowered them both into the fissure and started to climb down the vertical rock face, letting Brae shine her glow rod downwards to illuminate what lay below them and it was in the beam of this light that he saw the first visible signs of the Sith outpost.

"Brae, do you see that?" he asked and behind him she nodded.

"Yes master." she replied, "It looks like a doorway."

"I think its a passage that was exposed during bombardment." Jayk said, "Either that or a seismic disturbance opened up the ground here. In either case, that is our way inside."

Jayk then pushed off from the rock face so that he could swing towards the opening below, something he repeated several times before being satisfied with their position and continuing to climb straight down until finally reaching the opening of the passageway.

"Brae, can you climb inside?"

"Yes master." Brae replied, releasing her grip on Jayk enough to allow her to climb off his back and into the passageway where she untied the syntherope from around her and waited for Jayk to follow. The two jedi looked down the passageway and saw the tracks in the dust covered floor

"It looks like they went that way." Jayk said, drawing his lightsaber and activating it, "Come on let's go."

Brae swapped the glow rod for her on lightsaber and began to follow Jayk along the passageway.

Impatience.

"Master something's waiting for us down here. I can feel it." she said, "It's been here a long time and it wants to get out."

"Then we need to hurry." Jayk responded, "If the raiders are able to reach it first then there's no telling what they could inadvertently release." and he started to pick p his pace.

Danger.

Even with the shadow of the Dark Side all around him Jayk still sensed the attack before it came and he lifted his lightsaber into a defensive position in time to deflect the blaster bolt back at the two men firing down the passageway at him. Had they not been using a piece of wrecked machinery for cover then they would have been killed by their own blaster fire but as it was the energy bolts either struck the machinery or flew over their heads.

"Master!" Brae exclaimed.

"I'm fine. Keep behind me." Jayk said, pressing forwards as he continued to block the energy blasts heading towards him. Brae activated her own lightsaber but could only watch as her uncle did all the work of protecting them both until they were only a few metres away from where the two raiders firing at them were hiding, "Now!" Jayk yelled and both he and Brae leapt forwards to engage their opponents, cutting both down with single swings of their lightsabers.

5.

The chamber had once been some sort of laboratory but now it was just another empty space, its contents removed by the victorious jedi. But the smooth white nature of the walls and the fittings for specialised equipment gave the chamber's original function away. According to Teron's master however, there was a second chamber connected to this first one, a chamber that had been concealed to the best abilities of the Sith who had built this place.

"I don't get it." one of Teron's men said, "There's nothing here."

"That's because you're not looking right." Teron replied, "We're here for something very important and something this important requires sacrifice." and at that moment he drew his knife and a smile spread across his face.

"Hey, the gang member who had spoken said as he stared at the blade, "I didn't mean-"

"Shut up!" Teron snapped. Then he added, "Listen."

"Blaster fire." a gang member said.

"Looks like the jedi have found their way down here after all. Just like you said Mister Sharr."

"All the more reason for us to hurry up with what we're doing here then." Teron said and he looked down at his free hand as he drew his blade across it to draw blood. Holding this over the centre of a shallow design carved into the otherwise smooth floor he squeezed his fist to prompt more blood to pump out and spill onto the floor where it ran into the design.

As soon as this happened the design began to glow, the light spreading out from the centre point until it was completely illuminated.

"I've got a very bad feeling about this." one of the gang members said but Teron just grinned as all of a sudden the wall at the far end of the chamber parted to reveal what lay behind.

"What the kriff is this poodoo?" a gang member asked when Teron strode up to the shelves behind the false wall and picked a transparent cylinder from one of the shelves that were lined with such containers. Looking intently into the cylinder as he walked away from the wall, Teron could see that it held a liquid that had a golden colour to it while there was a thicker milky residue of some kind that made up the bottom two or three centimetres of the contents.

"Burn the rest." he said, "Whatever happens the jedi must never find any of this."

"Any of what? What the kriff is that stuff?" one of his men asked in response.

"Life." Teron answered as he continued to head towards the door, "Or maybe death. I suppose it all depends on your point of view."

"Brae turn off your lightsaber." Jayk said just as he shut down his own weapon.

"But master-"

"Never mind why my young apprentice. Just do it."

"Yes master." Brae replied and she deactivated her own lightsaber as well. However, rather than leaving them in darkness now that both of the glowing blades had been deactivated the two jedi found that there was still enough light to see by thanks to a flickering orange light that was coming from some point up ahead of them, "Master, is that fire?" Brae asked and Jayk nodded.

"Yes, I think it is. Which means either the raiders have damaged something by accident or they have found what they came here for and are destroying everything else. In either case I have a bad feeling about this."

"So what do we do now?" Brae asked.

"We hurry. The raiders have obviously not come back this way so they must have another way out and we need to follow them before the fire spreads enough to cut us off." Jayk told her and he reactivated his lightsaber before the two jedi started to run towards the source of the flames, knowing that this was the direction taken by the gang.

When they came to the passageway that ran past the ancient laboratory Jayk and Brae ground to a halt. The flames were still confined to the laboratory itself but smoke from the fire was billowing out and starting to fill the passageway itself.

"Oxidizers." Jayk said as he pulled a compact respirator from his belt and fitted it over his nose and mouth to keep out the smoke. Then he ran forwards, ducking beneath the thickest of the cloud to avoid getting the particles in his eyes as much as possible. In this respect Brae had an advantage. Unlike most members of the Udra family, Brae's height was below average and she stood barely one and a half metres tall and this meant that at this point very little of the smoke got down low enough to be noticeable to her.

Clearing the smoke, the two jedi found themselves in a part of the outpost that was far enough from the opening in the fissure that no dust had reached it and there were no longer any tracks for them to follow. Jayk was just considering how to track the raiders from this point on when all of a sudden he felt Brae grab hold of

him.

"What's wrong?" he asked, looking around at her. But the answer was obvious for him to see as Brae tore the oxidizer from her face and bent over, retching, "Brae, did you inhale any of-"

"No master." she gasped as she shook her head, "It's just I can sense what was in there. The Jedi from the Civil War missed something and now it's been let out. I can feel its evil."

"Then I must ask you to take the lead." Jayk told her, "Your ability to sense whatever it is that they took is the only way we have to track them now."

Brae nodded.

"I'll do it." she said, nodding in agreement and she let go of his robes and moved forwards, letting the somewhat disturbing presence in the Force of whatever it was that the raiders had taken from the chamber to guide her path.

The floor plan of the outpost Teron had recovered from the Jedi archive led Teron to a passageway that provided an underground link to one of the smaller satellite facilities that during the war had served as defence posts to protect the main facility. It was Teron's intention to use one of these as an exit in an area where the transport that had brought them to this world could pick them up from rather than having to walk across rough terrain with their precious cargo. The problem was that the Jedi had not bothered to update their survey in the more than three thousand years since the end of the war and during that time the passageway Teron wanted to take had collapsed, the ceiling caving in and blocking the entire passageway.

"Maybe there's another way around." someone said.

"Or maybe we can dig through. It may not go far." another added.

"No." Teron said, "If we go back we risk running into the Jedi and this could go on for a thousand metres for all we know."

"So what do you want to do?" the nearest of his gang asked.

"We'll have to dig upwards, use our blasters to punch through to the surface if we have to." Teron replied.

"That'll mean going across country." the gang member he was speaking to pointed out.

"I know." Teron said, nodding in agreement, "But it's our only hope now." then he looked at two of the other gang members, "You two, we need to slow the Jedi down. Head back and do whatever you can to hold them up."

"We're supposed to stop two Jedi?" one asked.

"You're supposed to do what you're told." Teron responded, "Perhaps you think you're being treated unfairly?"

"No. Of course not."

"Good. Now get a move on and do your job."

With the presence in the Force that she was following growing stronger Brae knew that they were closing in on the raiders. But as she led Jayk towards this disturbance she began to feel something else in the Force as well, something not as powerful but noticeable all the same and like what she was following this was getting closer as well.

Fear.

"Master I think there's someone just up ahead." she whispered.

"Do they have whatever was taken from the burning room?" Jayk asked and Brae shook her head.

"I don't think so. That's still further ahead. But whoever it is I know that they are afraid."

"Perhaps another group left behind to try and stop us. Or at least slow us down." Jayk said, "Perhaps the raiders have run into difficulties up ahead and are looking to buy time."

"Do you want me to stay in front master?" Brae asked.

"For now yes. But be ready to pull back if necessary." Jayk replied and then Brae started to advance again.

Now though she followed the sensation of fear that she could sense from the raiders sent to try and slow them down, reasoning that the more she knew about their location the more unlikely it would be that they would be able to spring some sort of surprise attack.

However, the two gang members sent to do whatever they could to slow down the Jedi were not completely unprepared to meet them and it was only thanks to another tremor in the Force felt by both Jayk and Brae that they were not caught unaware themselves.

Danger.

"Brae look out!" Jayk yelled at the same moment as she sensed the threat and identified its source.

The threat came from a small cluster of rubble positioned at the side of the passageway in a pile. This looked innocent enough but Brae sensed that there was something else beneath those stones and instinctively she unleashed a telekinetic blast that hurled not only the stones but also the small explosive charge that was revealed along the passageway ahead of them just before the charge went off. Consisting of little more than the detonator and a small amount of commercial explosive there was not much of a blast from the charge and it was not sufficiently powerful to damage the structure of the passageway and cause a collapse. But

had it detonated beneath the stones then it would have filled the passageway with flying debris that would have been unable to inflict significant structural damage but still been lethal against a flesh and blood target. Fortunately for the two Jedi the charge flew slower than most of the stones used to conceal it and so when it detonated the shock wave only served to push them further away from the Jedi they were intended to kill. The blast still exerted a significant force against the two Jedi, a force enough to disable an ordinary human at least temporarily. However, Jayk opened his mind to the Force and drew on its power to resist this and retain his concentration. This meant that when the two men lying in wait for them leant around the corner they had been using for cover found him charging towards them.

Both men opened fire together using their blasters on semi-automatic to send rapidly aimed shots at the Jedi. Had all of these been aimed for the centre of Jayk's body or at least anywhere close to the same spot he would have been able to control the direction in which he deflected the blaster bolts as he twisted his lightsaber to parry each one in turn. But the two men had already planned for this and while one fired at his upper body the other aimed for his legs and while this did not prevent him from parrying their attacks the extra time it took meant that he had to settle for simply stopping them from hitting him.

Unable to prevent the Jedi from closing the gap between them, the two gang members began to fall back and one of them produced a grenade from his belt and rolled it across the floor towards Jayk. Jayk was just about to use the Force to push the grenade back towards the two men just as Brae had with their mine but at the same moment that he focused his mind on it the grenade went off. However, instead of a cloud of metal fragments or a powerful concussive blast there was just a sudden 'fizz' and a thick white cloud began to fill the passageway.

"Brae get back!" Jayk shouted as he withdrew to escape the expanding cloud of phosphorous that he knew would burn him if it came into contact with his flesh.

Brae was just recovering her senses following the blast when Jayk picked her up and started to pull her away from the chemical cloud.

"Wait!" she snapped, "My lightsaber." and she reached out to scoop up the weapon from where she had dropped it. Then when they were a safe distance from the cloud she looked at Jayk, "Master, what do we do now?" she asked.

"By the time that cloud clears the raiders will be long gone." Jayk replied, "We need to find an alternative way of keeping up with them."

"But we don't know if there is a second route." Brae pointed out.

"Not quite true my young apprentice. We may not know whether there is another passageway we can take that will lead us to our quarry but we there is a second route we can take. One that I doubt they will be able to predict." and he looked upwards.

"Oh, I've got a bad feeling about this." Brae said.

The structure of the passageway had been designed to resist damage caused by external bombardment but to line it with any of the Sith materials capable of resisting the damage caused by a lightsaber blade would have represented an excessive use of valuable resources and so each stroke of Jayk's lightsaber cut a deep gouge in the ceiling of the passageway. He continued to hack away until he heard a groaning sound that suggested the structure had been critically weakened whereupon he shut off his lightsaber and stepped back.

"Okay Brae, time to do your thing." he said, "Remember, focus and ignore any negative thoughts you may have. These are the Dark Side trying to tempt you."

"Yes master." Brae replied and she closed her eyes and reached out her hand as she focused her mind on the Force. All around her she could sense the influence of the Dark Side, still present after so many centuries but among all of this she found the presence of her uncle shining through the darkness and this allowed her to remain calm as she projected another telekinetic blast aimed upwards. This smashed into the already weakened ceiling and there was a sound like a clap of thunder as the rock above the passageway exploded upwards, hurling debris in all directions just as if a laser blast had struck the surface. Slowly Brae opened her eyes to see the results of her work and she smiled when she saw a shaft of daylight shining down into the passageway.

"I did it." she said in amazement.

"Of course you did. I never doubted you for a second." Jayk responded before he leapt up through the hole to reach the surface.

6.

"I see daylight!" one of Teron's men called out. The man was the largest of the group and had done most of the heavy lifting while Teron stood back and watched while he looked after his precious cargo.

"Quickly," he exclaimed, "everybody out onto the surface." and he started to move towards the hole leading up to the surface when he heard the sound of footsteps from behind him and he turned around to see the two men he had sent back to engage the jedi hurrying towards him, "What happened?" he demanded, "Why are you back here?"

"We tried laying a mine but the jedi got past it," one of them explained, "and one of them was almost right on us when we used a white phosphorous grenade to cover our retreat. We figured that even a jedi couldn't make it through that so we just kept on running back here."

"Well you better hope they didn't find a way through." Teron replied sternly, "Now wait here because you two are at the back of the queue." and then he turned back towards the hole and started to climb.

The hole brought Teron and his men out into a narrow path between two steeply sloping rock faces that Teron was disappointed to see was too narrow for their ship to land in. However, now that they were on the surface it was reasonable to assume that a comlink signal would be able to reach their vessel and so Teron took his out and activated it.

"This is Teron. We've got what we came for but we've got jedi on our tail. Get the ship into the air and head for us. We'll try and find a suitable landing zone and signal you again for a pick up."

Sat in the cockpit of the gang's transport Tylo smiled.

"Well isn't that interesting." he said, looking at where he had unceremoniously dumped the body of its pilot, "Your boss needs a ride out of here. Oh well, I suppose we shouldn't keep him waiting." and he began the ship's start up sequence.

"That way." Brae said, pointing along a narrow mountain path, "I'm certain of it."

"Then that's the way we go." Jayk replied, "We'll keep our lightsabers shut off until the last minute. Hopefully they won't realise we're here until we're right on top of them."

The two jedi then started to hurry along the path. With no choice in the direction they could take there was no need for Brae to stay in front and Jayk took the lead once more. Then there was the sound of powerful repulsorlift engines from overhead and looking up Jayk saw the gang's transport circling in the sky above them.

"Brae we need to hurry." he said, "If they make it to that transport we'll lose them for good."

"Yes master." Brae agreed as she hurried along with him.

It was not long after that that they came across the hole where Teron's men had dug themselves out from the underground passageway and Jayk paused to look down into it.

"It would seem that we were not the only ones forced to come to surface." he said.

"And they've left us a trail to follow." Brae added as she looked at the tracks left in the path ahead of them.

Leaping over the hole, the jedi continued to rush along the path.

Teron's group was moving as quickly as they could, heading away from the jedi but the larger group moved slower than they did and as they neared the gang members Jayk also sensed the disturbance in the Force created by the cylinder Teron had taken that had caused Brae so much distress until she was able to become accustomed to it.

"Master! There they are." Brae exclaimed as she caught sight of Teron and his men ahead of them. But rather than being penned in by the steep rock faces to either side of them the gang had just made it to an area of relatively open ground large enough for their transport to land in and from overhead the sound of engines grew louder as the vessel descended to pick them up.

"There's the ship!" one of Teron's men called out as the transport came in to land.

"And not a moment too soon either." Teron responded, sensing the presence of the two jedi behind them and turning around to see them charging towards his men with their lightsabers active.

Meanwhile ahead of them the transport touched down and shortly after its hatch slid open. But rather than the expected pilot it was Tylo that emerged from the vessel with his blaster in his hand and he opened fire almost immediately, shooting two of the gang members before they even knew what was happening.

"What the kriff is going on?" Teron exclaimed as he took cover, doing his best to shelter the cylinder and its valuable contents.

"It's Kurrast!" one of his men who was familiar with Tylo replied.

"Then shoot him. We need that ship." Teron ordered.

All around him his men drew weapons of their own and returned fire. Tylo had expected this though and he darted away from his exposed position at the hatch towards a nearby rocky outcrop, firing on the move to keep the heads of the gang members down until he was safely behind cover. However, in moving away from the transport's hatch he created a gap that Teron noticed immediately.

"Now!" he snapped and he broke into a run, heading straight for the open hatch. His men followed him, most still firing intermittent blaster shots towards Tylo's position and in turn he fired back, hitting several of the gang members before they could reach the safety of the transport. But Teron made it to the ship unscathed along with the cylinder and he rushed inside, accompanied by his surviving men.

One of the first things they saw inside was the body of the original pilot slumped where Tylo had left him and Teron scowled.

"Someone get us into the air." he hissed, "I want us out of this system before the jedi can come after us."

"They're getting away." Brae said as she and Jayk reached the open ground only to see the transport rise up off the ground into the air. Meanwhile Tylo emerged from behind the rock and calmly walked towards them.

"What did you think you were doing?" Jayk called out to him, "You had control of their ship and you let them just take it back?"

"Hey, it's me." Tylo replied as he took out his comlink, "I know what I'm doing," and he activated the device, "Cal are you there?" he signalled.

"Right here. Flying this ship takes some work but I think I've got the hang of it." Cal's voice responded.

"You let Cal fly the *Swift Exit*?" Brae commented.

"Sure. All he needed to do was take off, circle a few kilometres out and then come in and pick us up." Tylo replied.

"Yes but you still allowed them to escape." Jayk pointed out, "Now we have nothing."

"Maybe not. Maybe we have exactly what we came here for." Tylo said as the *Swift Exit* descended, its access ramp lowering as it touched down and he dashed towards it.

Inside the ship Cal hologram was waiting in the lounge, smiling.

"What are you talking about Tylo?" Jayk asked as he and Brae followed the smuggler aboard his ship.

"I'm talking about how I had unrestricted access to that transport for a few hours and knew that there was no guarantee that even if we managed to capture any of Morton's men you'd be able to get them to talk before he found out and did a disappearing act before you could go and arrest him. So I came up with another plan. A better plan." and he looked at Cal, "Well?" he asked.

"We got the signal." Cal replied, "Loud and clear."

"Signal? What signal?" Brae said.

"The signal I set the nav computer aboard that ship to send when someone entered co-ordinates into it for a hyperspace jump." Tylo said.

"Ah, now I see." Jayk said, "An interesting idea."

"Interesting? Inspired more likely." Tylo said, "They've input the co-ordinates of the system they're heading for and they've not idea that we know where they're heading for. Hopefully, that will be right where Morton has his base of operations set up. So how about we stop hanging around talking bantha poodoo and go catch up with them?"