

# STAR WARS

## TALES OF THE JEDI



### III-I: MALICE

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ELEVEN FAMILIES.  
TWELVE GENERATIONS.  
ONE EVIL.

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THREE HUNDRED YEARS AGO A SMALL GROUP OF INTREPID EXPLORERS SURVEYED THE NARTHIS SECTOR AND SOON IT BECAME ANOTHER PART OF THE GALACTIC REPUBLIC. THE DESCENDANTS OF MOST OF THESE EXPLORERS STILL RESIDE IN THE SECTOR, WHERE THEY HAVE BECOME BOTH FAMOUS AND WEALTHY. BUT DID THE ORIGINAL EXPLORERS DIVULGE EVERYTHING THEY DISCOVERED, OR HAVE THEIR FAMILIES BEEN HIDING SOME DARK SECRET EVER SINCE? NOW A JEDI KNIGHT HAS VANISHED WITHOUT TRACE AND THE INVESTIGATION WILL BRING ANOTHER FAMILY TO THE SECTOR. FROM NOW ON NOTHING WILL BE THE SAME...

**MALICE**

NOW WANTED FUGITIVES JEDI KNIGHT GAL UDRA AND HIS SISTER LARA SEEK SANCTUARY IN THE REMOTE LOCATION OF DORN STATION. BUT THE ANCIENT FACILITY IS HOME TO SOMETHING ELSE AS WELL, SOMETHING ANCIENT AND EVIL. IF THE UDRAS CANNOT UNCOVER THE SECRETS OF DORN STATION THEIR SANCTUARY MAY BECOME THEIR TOMB...

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<http://thehazugfiles.uk/Index.html>

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# 1 .

Cal Udra sat back in his seat in the cockpit of the *Bright Hope*, repeatedly tossing his lightsaber into the air so that it spun around before falling back into his hand. On the screen in front of him pages of data flashed up just long enough for him to take in what it contained before the next one appeared to take its place.

"Celebrity gossip Cal?" a young woman's voice asked and as Cal looked around his younger sister Lara reached out and snatched his lightsaber out of the air.

"I was looking for word of Gayal." He said, turning back to the screen.

"Missing your girlfriend?" Lara asked as she sat in the co-pilot's seat, "I thought you were supposed to be figuring out a way of clearing my name of murder."

"I am." Cal replied and he looked at his sister, "Look, whoever tied you up—"

"And stole my clothes and framed me." Lara interrupted.

"Yes that. Whoever did that also took Gayal and she hasn't been seen since. I'm looking for any sign of her resurfacing."

"And you thought the gossip pages would be a good place to start?"

"Well given her history—"

"Of getting arrested."

Cal frowned.

"Given her history I thought that if she appeared anywhere then there'd be a photographer there to record it."

"No luck I take it?" Lara asked.

"None." Cal replied, "I keep finding stuff about her sisters, who seem to be keeping up their ways even without Gayal. Look, here's one of Sial being picked up out of the gutter. But Gayal's just vanished."

"So her sisters are still partying even though she's vanished?"

"The entire family seems to be acting as if nothing's happened." Cal said, "Whatever happened to Gayal I think that they know all about it." And he pointed to the screen as it showed a picture of Gayal's parents; Del and Faye Karn attending a charity gala, both were smiling for the cameras.

"So they likely know all about framing me for Kraus' murder." Lara commented, frowning.

*Kill her and you can go home now.*

The sudden thought appeared in Cal's mind as if from nowhere and it sent a shudder down his spine.

"What's wrong?" Lara asked, noticing her brother's sudden discomfort.

"Yes." He replied abruptly, "Maybe this place isn't the safe haven I was hoping it would be." And he leapt up out of his chair and rushed out of the cockpit.

"Cal, wait." Lara called out after him and she followed him.

Cal ran straight out of the *Bright Hope* and into the dilapidated hangar of Dorn Station, the long abandoned space station on the fringe of Republic space in the Narthis sector. There was only one other vessel present in the hangar, another delaya-class courier like the *Bright Hope*. Cal and Lara had captured it from outlaws a few months earlier and so far no one had bothered to make the trip out here to claim it. Now it would serve the exiled Jedi as either an alternate transport or a source of spare parts for the *Bright Hope*.

But it was not this other ship that interested Cal and instead he headed deeper into the station with Lara hurrying along behind him.

"Cal! Wait up!" she called out, but her brother made no effort to slow down.

From ahead there was a tapping sound and a tiny green figure came into around a corner.

"Sensed your distress I did." The figure announced as he looked up at Cal.

"Tyshon." Cal replied, coming to an abrupt halt and kneeling down to get closer to the much older Jedi, "I sensed the Dark Side again."

"Hmm. The Dark Side pervades this place." Tyshon replied, looking upwards and around, "For two centuries have I tried to locate its source. But ever elusive it remains."

"Well it called out to me loud and clear." Cal said and then he looked around at Lara, "It told me to kill my sister."

"Hmmm. Disturbing this is." Tyshon said and he looked down at the deck.

"Hang on." Lara said, "Why does the Dark Side want me dead?"

"Not you was the Dark Side interested in." Tyshon told her, "Just calling to your master it was."

"The message claimed that if I killed you I would be able to go back home." Cal explained and then before Lara could reply he went on, "Though of course its nonsense. After breaking you out of custody I'm still in as much trouble as you are."

"But will whatever's sending these messages keep on doing it?" Lara asked.

"If you remain. Yes." Tyshon answered.

"Then we need to get to the bottom of it." Cal said and he looked down at Tyshon, "You say that the Sith can place their essence inside an inanimate object?"

"The most powerful only." Tyshon said, "But yes, do that they can."

"Well I'm in no mood to share this place with a Sith spectre. Tell me more about the deaths."

Tyshon rummaged through the belongings he had amassed on the station. When the Republic engineers who had attempted to turn it into a hyperspace navigation beacon had abandoned their work they had left behind many small items and the diminutive jedi had collected all he could find.

"How long is he going to go on doing this?" Lara whispered as she ducked out of the way of a flying datapad.

"Your guess is as good as mine." Cal replied. Then he added a sudden, "Duck!" as a flashlight flew towards them.

"Not long. Not long." Tyshon said, overhearing the exchange and then he came to a halt, "Ah. This. Yes, this is it." And he held up a large datapad.

Lara pulled a face.

"That antique?" she said.

"Antique?" Tyshon repeated, "Younger than I this is. Am I an antique as well to you?"

"Ah, well-" Lara stammered and Tyshon grinned.

"He's joking." Cal said and then he frowned, "I think."

"Yes, yes. Joking I was." Tyshon said and he set the datapad down on the table and tried to turn it on.

However, after two hundred years the power cell had lost its charge.

"Here." Cal said, pulling his own datapad from his robes and sliding it across the table to Tyshon. Tyshon took it and removed the power cell, swapping it for the expended one in the older datapad. Immediately the obsolete device came to life.

"Look. Look." Tyshon said and he handed the datapad to Cal, "A list of the dead."

"The dead?" Lara exclaimed, her eyes widening, "What do you mean dead?"

"Accidents it was said." Tyshon explained, "At first."

"Let me guess." Cal said as he scrolled down the list of names, "Eventually they decided that something was working against them."

"Yes. Something evil. Left they did. Gave up and left."

"I need time to check this out." Cal said, holding up the datapad.

"Your time you may take." Tyshon said, "Going nowhere we are."

The datapad held details of each and every death amongst the engineering team. It was not unheard of for such groups to suffer occasional casualties, but such occurrences were rare and explainable whereas the vast majority of the deaths Cal looked at required a whole series of highly unlikely events to happen in coordination. The reports on the datapad stated that when sabotage had first been suspected the engineering team took steps to prevent it, but no matter what they tried the saboteur seemed able to bypass their best security and the deaths continued to mount. Convinced that the culprit was one of their own, the engineers began to suspect everyone and fights broke out between them as accusations were made. Cal had no doubt that the influence of what he suspected to be the remains of a Sith was responsible for most if not all of these.

Then Cal noticed that there had been a delay between the arrival of the engineers and the first death. Whatever was at large here had allowed them to replace the expended consumables in the life support systems and refuel the main reactor. It was only when the engineering team attempted to gain control of the station's primary systems that the trouble began. The main computer remained isolated behind a firewall of alien design that resisted even best attempts at slicing. On the other hand interface devices designed to allow Republic technology to be joined with the station's systems were subjected to cyber attacks and failed, often within hours of being installed. Obviously whoever was responsible knew more about Republic technology than the Republic knew about the station's. Again this pointed to a Sith who would have had centuries to familiarise himself with the station before they arrived.

Cal thought about what this meant. The presence aboard Dorn Station clearly did not object to the presence of others, but it obviously wanted to keep control of the station to itself and while it had been willing to strike at the Republic engineers it had never attempted to kill Tyshon that he had mentioned. Cal smiled.

"I've got an idea!" he called out, jumping out of his bedroom chair and rushing into the room next door that was in the process of being converted into a lounge area that the Jedi could share. Lara and Tyshon looked at him.

"What?" Lara asked, "You know where this Sith spectre is on the station?"

"No." Cal replied, "But I think I know how we can flush it out and force it to engage us directly. Then we can deal with it."

"How?" Lara asked.

"We try and continue the work of the Republic's engineering crew and try to bring Dorn Station's primary systems on line under our control."

"How will that force it out into the open?" Lara asked, a puzzled look on her face.

"Because that's what it fears." Cal replied, "Someone else taking control of the station. Look at the reports. The deaths only started when the Republic's engineers tried to do exactly that. Now if I'm right then that Sith spectre was quite happy for them to restock and refuel the station, but then it had to let them know who was in charge."

"An interesting idea you have." Tyshon said.

"Well if it's so great how come you never tried it in the two hundred years you've been here?" Lara asked him.

"A lack of knowledge I had." Tyshon answered, "Foolish to rush to face our foe alone it would be. But in numbers strength we have. Yes?"

Lara frowned.

"I've got a very bad feeling about this." She said.

## 2.

"Come, come. This way." Tyshon said as he led the two younger jedi through the empty corridors of Dorn Station. Any attempt to bring the station's primary systems under their control required the trio to leave the outlying areas and make their way towards the core where the command centre and main reactors were located. Unfortunately neither Cal nor Lara had any knowledge of the station's layout beyond the small areas they had visited so far. Therefore they relied on Tyshon who had not only spent time with the Republic's engineering team but had also spent many years exploring it alone.

Just like the outer areas the core of the station showed the signs of two centuries of neglect and lighting panels functioned only intermittently. However, when Tyshon led the Udras into the chamber that was undoubtedly a control centre and waved his hand towards the light switch all of the lights came on right away.

"Were these chairs made in the Republic?" Lara asked, looking around at the seats positioned in front of each control station. Looking for himself Cal noticed that they did indeed have the look of Republic produced goods, optimised for humans and other similar species.

"Yes, yes." Tyshon answered, "Brought here by the engineers they were."

"They wanted somewhere comfortable to sit while they worked." Cal commented.

"So where do we start?" Lara asked, "I mean this isn't Republic tech."

"Looks like someone's already thought of that." Cal replied as he walked up to the nearest console and saw that it was covered in tiny labels on which someone had scrawled in Basic. The varying colours and handwriting suggesting that the Republic engineers had undertaken this before they abandoned the station. He also noticed that the consoles were labelled in an alien alphabet beneath these stuck on labels.

"Over here I suggest." Tyshon said, crossing the room and Lara followed him.

"Sensors?" she said.

"Sensors. Yes." Tyshon replied, "Useful to know what is around us it would be."

"Yes it would be unfortunate if there happened to be a Republic patrol ship out there when we started turning things on. Cal agreed and he walked over and stood by the console, "Lara if you wouldn't mind." He added, pointing to the chair.

"Why me?" Lara asked, confused.

"Because if that Sith spectre decides to strike right away then Tyshon and I have a better chance of fighting it than you have."

Lara frowned and sat down at the console. Arrayed in front of her were a variety of blank displays and switches.

"Try passive first." Cal said, "If there is a Republic ship out there I don't want them to see an active sensor sweep."

"Okay then. Now let me see." Lara said and she looked over the console for anything that looked like a passive sensor system, "Ah. Here we go. Thermal imaging." And as she reached out and activated the system Cal reached for his lightsaber.

Nothing happened.

One of the monitors came on, but with no vessels anywhere near the station it remained blank. More importantly the Sith spectre did not appear.

"Sense anything?" Cal said to Tyshon and the short statured jedi snorted.

"Hello Mister Sith?" Lara said, looking upwards, "Come out, come out wherever you are."

"Lara stop taunting the Dark Side." Cal told her, "Now try turning something else on. Since there's nothing out there try bringing active sensors on line."

Lara looked back at the console and checked the handwritten labels. Handily one was labelled 'RADAR' and she pressed it. Around the room more monitors came to life, but as before there was no sign of the mysterious Sith entity.

"I guess sensors aren't of interest to it." Cal said.

"So what would be?" Lara asked, "I mean this place is a navigation beacon right? So what's more important than sensors?"

"Communications maybe." Cal suggested, "Though I'd rather not risk the computer sending out an identity pulse that would alert the entire sector to our presence here."

"Only to us a beacon this place was to be." Tyshon said, "To it's builders or to the Sith, who knows?"

"Then what do you suggest?" Cal asked.

"The weapons." Tyshon said.

"This place has weapons?" Lara said, "Why are we only just hearing about this?"

"What sort of weapons are we talking about?" Cal asked.

"Simple. Mass drivers, missile and some particle beams." Tyshon said, "Many in number but by themselves weak."

"I guess whoever built this place didn't have our level of technology then." Cal said, "At least not in weaponry."

"But still appeal to the Sith they will." Tyshon added.

"So point me to them." Lara said, getting out of the chair. Tyshon pointed to a long console located in a secluded area of the room that had no chairs positioned in front of it, "Looks like I'm standing then." Lara said and she walked over to the console. Like the sensor console this one had multiple monitors set into it and mounted on the wall above. However each station had only a handful of controls, including a tracker ball that Lara assumed was used for targeting, "Okay here goes nothing." She said and she walked along the console, pressing buttons to activate Dorn Station's weapons. One by one the weapon control stations came to life and the control centre's main monitor showed images of turrets emerging from recesses set into the station's hull. At the same time a klaxon began to sound.

"Well if that doesn't attract the Sith I don't know what will." Cal said as Lara joined him in drawing her lightsaber.

However it seemed that the Sith spectre had other ideas and did not present itself.

"I don't get it." Cal said, looking up at the ceiling and turning on the spot and then in a raised voice he called out, "Come on! We're right here and we're taking control of your precious space station."

"Mysterious the ways of the Sith are." Tyshon said.

"Infuriating more like." Cal said and he put his lightsaber away and took out the old datapad instead, "I just don't get it. The deaths started when the Republic's engineers started trying to get all this stuff under their control. Its right in here in black and white."

"What else were they doing?" Lara asked.

"What do you mean?" Cal asked in reply.

"Well were the people killed all working in here or-"

"Hang on there little sister." Cal interrupted, "You may just have something there."

"I do?"

"Yes I know, I'm as amazed as you are." Cal said as he scrolled through the page of data on the datapad.

"Hey!" Lara exclaimed.

"Yes here it is." Cal said, ignoring her and he held the datapad out angled for Tyshon to see, "None of the deaths took place in here." He said.

"That's odd isn't it?" Lara asked, "I mean if taking out everyone in here would pretty much guarantee that no one could gain control of the station."

"Yes, but what if control of the station wasn't what the Sith was concerned about?" Cal asked and then he glanced down at Tyshon, "What exactly is a Sith spectre?"

"A method of continuing their existence beyond death the Sith see it as. Rather than become one with the Force and endure the oblivion that awaits them in the Dark Side, to an object or place they tie themselves and remain here in the material universe. Forever trapped."

"In the Temple I was taught that there was more than that." Cal said in response, "That by becoming such an entity a Sith could one day return to life in another body."

"Yes. Possible that is." Tyshon agreed, "If the existing spirit can be driven out, then exchange places with them the Sith can."

"I think that's why the spectre wanted me to kill you." Cal then said, looking at Lara.

"Huh?" she replied.

"Murdering you would have been an act of evil and driven me towards the Dark Side." Cal explained, "With my link to the Light Side diminished I'd be an easier target for the Sith."

"Correct you may be." Tyshon said, "But how this helps us I do not see."

"The Sith wouldn't want this place to remain abandoned." Cal explained, "It needs people to come here so it can find a new host. That's why it tolerates the few beings that still come here."

So why kill all those people and drive away the Republic's engineers?" Lara asked.

"Because they were involved in trying to figure out how this station worked and who built it." Cal said, "Look." And he held out the datapad again, "All those mysterious deaths and accidents occurred when someone was attempting to access the main computer directly."

Yivack Klorr's transport ship dropped out of hyperspace in full view of Dorn Station and the first thing he did was check his sensor display to see if there was anyone else around.

"We're being scanned." He said and the man sat beside him in the cockpit looked at the display for himself.

"It's coming from the station." He said, "That thing's operational." Then he activated the ship's external cameras and zoomed in on Dorn Station, "Stang! Its got its weapons deployed as well!"

"Oh kriff!" Yivack exclaimed and he twisted the control column, pushing his ship into a tight evasive turn,

"Get the shields up quick Darrick. What the hell is going on here? This place has been dead for centuries."

"Wait hang on a minute." Darrick replied, "We're not being targeted."

"What?" Yivack asked in reply.

"Look for yourself. The station's sensors are running but all the weapons look to be on stand by. No targeting sweeps at all."

Yivack smiled.

"Maybe Uggaro's men got her early and have been busying themselves in playing around." He said.

"Yeah? Well I heard that everyone who tried playing around with this place's systems ended up sucking vacuum. That's why the Republic abandoned it."

"Even better." Yivack said, his smile widening, "If Uggaro's men are all dead then we can keep our cargo and still take their money. And their ship."

"Rip off a hutt? Are you insane?"

"How would he know it was us? Now go tell the others we're about to dock. Tell them to be ready for trouble. One or two of the hutt's men could still be alive and we need to deal with them before they can send word to the hutt."

The transport flew towards the prearranged hangar and set down. As soon as the hatch opened Yivack and his men came rushing out, all heavily armed with a variety of weapons.

"So where's the hutt's ship?" one of Yivack's thugs asked as he looked around the otherwise empty hangar.

"They were meant to dock here as well weren't they?" Darrick asked.

"Yes they were." Yivack answered, "But look on the bright side. Somewhere on this station is a ship we can take without worrying about the hutt finding out. Who knows, maybe his men will buy it off us right here."

Then for a brief moment Yivack thought he heard someone calling out to him and it took a moment to realise that he was not actually hearing it. The voice was inside his head.

*The main computer. Protect it and you will be rewarded.*

Leaving the control centre, the three jedi made their way through the corridors of Dorn Station once more with Tyshon leading them downwards to where the main computer was located.

"The computer is more than the means to control the station." Cal explained to Lara as they went, "It most likely contains a full record of the station's history which if I'm correct will include the presence here of the Sith."

"Correct you are." Tyshon agreed, "Give us the means to find the lair of this spectre accessing the computer would."

"Cal, if the Sith did control this place for a while then is it possible that there's more information about them in it?" Lara asked, "I mean about what they did elsewhere in the Narthis sector?" and a wide grin appeared on Cal's face.

"Little sister I could kiss you." He said.

"Please don't." Lara replied, pulling a face.

"It's just possible that if we can exorcise this Sith we'll have access to a complete record of their activities in the sector. We'll be able to figure out what it is the Founding Families seem so interested in."

"Dangerous that is." Tyshon warned them, "To learn the ways of the Sith, temptation to follow them does it offer." Then he came to sudden halt and held up his hand for the others to do the same.

"What's wrong?" Cal asked.

"Alone we are not." Tyshon said.

"The Sith?" Lara asked, drawing her lightsaber.

"No. Not the Sith." Tyshon replied, "Alive these beings are. But still the Dark Side I still sense within them."



### 3.

"What are we doing here?" one of Yivack's men asked as they followed him through Dorn Station's corridors.

"Yeah," another added, "I heard that people who leave the outer areas end up dead."

"Dead?" a third exclaimed, "Nobody said anything about getting killed when I signed up for—"

"Enough!" Darrick snapped, "We do as the boss says and he says we're going this way."

"But why boss?" the first to speak asked, "And how come you seem to know exactly where we're heading?"  
*He is weak.*

Yivack snarled as the voice that had been guiding him through the station spoke to him inside his head again.

*Kill him. Kill him now.*

Then without a moment's hesitation Yivack drew his pistol and shot the man who had dared question him, the gunshot echoing off the bulkheads as the bullet punched through the man's skull and sprayed blood across the wall behind him.

*Good. Make them fear you.*

"Anyone else got any stupid questions?" Yivack asked, looking around at his men and he looks of horror on their faces. Even Darrick seemed not to know how to react while Yivack still held the gun, "Good. Now let's keep going. We're almost there."

"Cal that sounded like a shot." Lara said.

"A gunshot it was." Tyshon said, "Death did I sense in the Force."

"Perhaps we should go back to the *Bright Hope* and get our blasters." Lara suggested, "The grenade launcher maybe."

"Lara I know you're desperate to have a go at using the grenade launcher," Cal replied, "But do you really think that firing off grenades inside here is a wise thing to do?"

"Our lightsabers enough will be." Tyshon added, "Nothing more does a jedi need." And then he began to head towards the source of the sound of the shot. This took the jedi to a stairwell that led down through the core of Dorn Station and from below they could hear the sound of footsteps echoing upwards towards them. "Sounds like quite a few of them." Cal said softly and he peered over the safety rail to stare down the stairwell. Sure enough some distance below he saw movement.

*Above you now.*

"Above us!" Yivack yelled and he pointed his gun up and fired up the stairwell, the noise of the weapon firing once again producing a loud echo that travelled up and down the shaft as well.

His men joined him in looking up and were just in time to see Cal as he retreated back away from the railing.

"I see him!" Darrick snapped and he fired his plasma pistol. However, the powerful pistol was well out of range and the energy bolt instead just dissipated, producing a brief flame in midair. On the other hand many of Yivack's men were armed with rifles of one sort or another and as they fired up the stairwell their shots whizzed past the jedi above them.

"I think they may know we're up here." Cal said as the spatial distortion of a pulse wave weapon tore a hole in the deck plating near his foot.

"Follow me you must." Tyshon said suddenly and rushing at the safety rail he vaulted over it, his lightsaber coming to life as he somersaulted down the centre of the stairwell.

Cal and Lara looked at one another.

"Syntherope?" Lara asked and Cal nodded.

"I'm not jumping." He said as he unreeled a length of syntherope from the dispenser on his belt and tied the end around the safety rail as Lara did the same. Then, with their lightsabers in one hand and the other keeping hold of the syntherope the two jedi leapt over the railing as well.

As he fell towards the men below the jedi Tyshon swung his lightsaber, blocking each attempt to shoot him down before he could reach them. As he drew level with the gunmen Tyshon reached out through the Force and pulled himself towards the landing they stood on.

"Jedi!" the nearest cried out just moments before he was impaled by Tyshon's lightsaber and he collapsed.

The back swing of Tyshon's attack sliced through the safety rail and when he jumped up to cut the arms from a man armed with a pulse wave rifle the man fell into the damaged section of rail and fell right through, plummeting downwards with the stumps of his arms flailing about as he screamed.

First Cal and then Lara then reached the level of the landing, tightening their grip on the syntherope that supported them to stop themselves from falling any further and both swung themselves through the gap in the safety rail created by the falling man. Facing three jedi proved too much for Yivack and his men and they began to fall back. At first this retreat was orderly, but it soon descended into a rout as each man tried to put as much distance between him and the jedi.

*No you fool! You must kill the jedi!*

Yivack ignored the voice for now, his own instinct for survival over riding its influence.

*Have it your way then. If you will not fight of your own accord then I will just have to force you to.*

Ahead of Yivack and his fleeing men there was a sudden rumbling and to their horror they saw a heavily armoured blast door closing to block their escape.

"No!" Darrick yelled and he looked around at Yivack, "What the kriff is going on here?"

*Go ahead. Tell him.*

Yivack looked Darrick in the eyes.

"If we kill the jedi we'll be rich." He said, "This place belongs to the most powerful being imaginable and he'll give us whatever we want in exchange for killing them."

"What good's money if we're all dead?" Darrick exclaimed, "And just who is this being that's so powerful yet needs us to get rid of the jedi for him?"

There was a shimmering from further down the corridor and a glowing white humanoid shape took form beside a computer terminal.

"That would be me." The spectre announced, "My name is Praeten Tyrr, Dark Lord of the Sith and master of this place and if you will not do my bidding then I have not reason to keep any of you alive." And as the spectre raised its hands bolts of force lightening leapt from its fingertips to engulf the men.

As his men lay on the floor screaming with pain Yivack was able to turn his weapon towards the spectre and he fired not once but repeatedly, emptying the magazine. But each of the solid projectiles passed straight through the spectre without effect and the laughter of a long dead Sith lord filled the corridor.

When the mysterious group of gunmen disappeared from the stairwell Lara bent down to pick up the dropped pulse wave rifle while Cal disengaged the syntherope line from his belt.

"They're still between us and the computer." Cal said. Then he looked down at Tyshon, "Aren't they?" he added.

"In our path they are." Tyshon replied.

"Who are they anyway?" Lara asked.

"Probably just some poor nerf herders that the Sith thought he could make use of. Right?" Cal replied, looking to Tyshon for an answer once more.

"Afraid to face us all the Sith may be." Tyshon said, "Using others to fight their battles a typical Sith method is. While remaining safely out of the way our real enemy is."

"Well we need to figure out a plan because I think that they'll be better prepared the next time we run into them." Cal said and then there was the sound of screaming from the direction that their attackers had fled.

"More motivated as well I think." Lara added. Then she raised the rifle, "At least we're better armed now though." She said.

The memory of the agony inflicted by Praeten's force lightening was not one that would after rapidly from the minds of Yivack's men and there was no question now that they would do whatever the Sith or Yivack demanded of them without question. They moved quickly through Dorn Station, heading towards the main computer until Yivack brought them to a halt along a long narrow passageway.

"Here." He said, "This is good. The corridor's too narrow for the jedi to go leaping out of the way and too long for them to be able to rush us without us getting of a decent amount of fire at them."

"We'll need cover." Darrick said, "Something solid enough that the jedi won't just be able to pick it up and fling it out of the way."

"Agree." Yivack said, "Horst, Krent go see what you can find. Bartan I want you to get back to the ship and fetch us a plasma fusion welder. And be quick about it. The jedi may be able to move anything that's not fixed down but I doubt even they can pick up something that's been welded to the floor."

Without a word the three men set off and Yivack looked around at the blank looks on the faces of the others.

"Just get ready." He said, "Just in case those kriffing jedi turn up before they get back." And then as his men began to press themselves up against the corridor walls, seeking out whatever cover they could find he added, "Just think about the money this deal will make us."

"This deal's getting worse all the time." Darrick muttered.

The jedi advanced in single file with their lightsabers shut off to avoid the distinctive humming sound giving them away. Being the one most familiar with the layout of Dorn Station Tyshon took the lead while Cal followed some distance behind him and Lara brought up the rear, right behind Cal and still clutching the pulse wave rifle across her chest.

"Do you really think we'll need that?" Cal muttered as he glanced at the rifle.

"Better to have it and not need it than need it and not have it." Lara replied, "You know, like the grenade launcher. One round would have taken out all those guys on the stairs."

"And probably taken out the stairs as well." Cal said, "Where would that have left us little sister?"

"Looking for another way around without needing to worry about these guys." Lara responded.

"Quiet." Tyshon said suddenly, "Always with you there is something to be said. Even when it is nothing."

"I've tried telling her." Cal said.

"Both of you." Tyshon said and Lara grinned.

"Ha ha." She said as Cal frowned.

"A dog would have been so much easier to work with." Cal muttered and it was Lara's turn to frown.

Then a tremor in the Force alerted Cal to something not quite right up ahead.

"Do you sense that?" he said to Tyshon.

"Sense it I do." The older jedi replied, "Wondering when you would I was."

"What?" Lara asked.

"Instead of your mouth, open your mind." Tyshon said, "Let the Force flow through."

Lara concentrated.

*Anger.*

*Fear.*

*Hatred.*

"That's close by." She whispered, looking around and tightening her grip on the rifle.

"Right round this corner." Cal added, "I think it's a trap."

"A trap it is." Tyshon agreed.

"So what do we do?" Lara asked.

"Spring the trap." Cal said, smiling.

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

Tyshon stepped out into the open at the junction where the tremor was coming from and immediately there was a shot, a brilliant blast of plasma that flew through the air where Tyshon had been before he leapt directly upwards and spun sideways, landing on the far side of the junction.

"You fool!" Yivack snapped, "You've given us away." Then he added, "Open fire!" and the corridor was suddenly filled with weapons fire.

Pressed up against the wall Tyshon held his lightsaber out in front of him as he peered around the corner and down the corridor to the barrier Yivack and his men had erected across it. From the other side Lara leant around the corner and fired the rifle.

"Glad I brought it now?" she said to Cal.

"Have you hit anything?" he asked in reply.

"Not yet." She admitted, frowning again.

"No way to them there is." Tyshon said, "Too many there are and too far."

"How about going around?" Cal asked.

"The only passage on this level this is." Tyshon said, "No way around."

"I wasn't thinking about this level." Cal said and he activated his lightsaber as he looked up at the ceiling.

"Go." Tyshon said, "Remain here and distract them we shall."

Cal swung his lightsaber over his head, cutting a roughly rectangular hole in the ceiling and then jumping back as it dropped to the deck with a 'clang'. Fortunately, the gunfire from down the corridor prevented anyone but the jedi from hearing this.

Cal then shut off his lightsaber again and took a deep breath as he let the Force flow through him. Then he leapt up through the hole he had just cut, emerging onto the level above and he looked around. The layout of this level was different to the one below and that left Cal with two choices. Firstly he could attempt to navigate around this level until he reached located a suitable spot behind the gunmen below, or alternatively he could opt for a more direct approach.

Turning his lightsaber on again Cal began to cut through the wall beside him.

One of Yivack's men reached to his belt where a grenade was tucked into it.

"No you idiot." Darrick exclaimed as he saw this, "The jedi will just hurl it right back at us." Then something occurred to him and he looked at Yivack, "Hey boss how many are down there?"

"I see the short one and the girl." Yivack replied.

"So where's the guy?" Darrick asked and Yivack's face fell.

"Anyone had eyes on the guy?" he asked but his men did not reply. Yivack looked back at Darrick, "He could be trying to get around behind us."

"Can that be done?" Darrick asked.

"Who knows? But take Bartan and Grayle and fall back. See if you can find another way around. If you can then take it, we'll catch them in a crossfire instead."

"Got it." Darrick said and he motioned to two men to follow him. Then as the trio moved back away from the barrier, keeping low to avoid being seen Yivack turned his attention back to the two jedi on the other side of it.

## 4.

Cal could sense the desperation of the gunmen through the intervening deck plates and he smiled as he realised that this meant he was headed in the right direction. Right now he was located right above them. He could of course have just cut through the floor right here and after letting the removed section drop on top of his enemies have dropped down after it, landing amongst them. However, if Cal's calculations were off even slightly he could end up on the wrong side of the barrier and right in front of the enemy guns. Additionally if he chose to cut through the floor where the men could see then they would be warned and it would only take one of them to turn his weapon on the hole at the moment that Cal jumped through to bring his outflanking strategy to an abrupt and fatal close. Cal pressed onwards instead, cutting through another wall to get behind the gunmen.

He came to a stop about twenty metres further on, certain that if he dropped down through the floor here the gunmen would be between him and the other two jedi. Now he used his lightsaber to cut through the floor, but he was careful to hold the weapon with just one hand, using the other to help focus his mind on the area of floor that he was cutting loose. That way when the final cut was made he would hopefully be able to keep hold of it through the Force and lift it clear rather than allow it to fall and risk giving him away. The plan worked and as Cal completed cutting the hole he felt the weight of the loose section of floor suddenly pulling at him through the Force. With a flick of his wrist he lifted it up and sent it skidding across the floor of the level he was on. Then he simply jumped down through the hole, his lightsaber held in both hands. Landing on the floor of the level below Cal could hear the sounds of gunfire from not far away and he smiled before heading that way. He came to a halt at a junction when he heard the sounds of battle from just around the corner and he peered around it. Sure enough he saw the gunmen lined up against their barrier firing at Lara and Tyshon at the far end of the corridor.

"If I just had my blaster I could-" Cal began to mutter to himself as he looked at the exposed gunmen before he realised that the thought was almost exactly what Lara had been suggesting earlier and he frowned. Instead he took out his point-to-point communications link and turned it on, "Lara," he whispered, "I'm in position now. I'll stay low but you and Tyshon should be ready to move." And without waiting for a reply he turned off the PTP link and put it away. Shutting off his lightsaber but keeping it in his hand Cal got down on the floor and began to crawl towards the gunmen, reaching out through the Force to keep them focused in the opposite direction at the jedi there.

"Cal's on his way." Lara told Tyshon as she shut off her PTP link.

"Good, an end to this stalemate will that put." He replied, "When your master's lightsaber we hear, advance we should."

Lara frowned.

"I wish you wouldn't call him that." She said and as the older jedi looked at her she added, "You know, my master."

"Your master he is." Tyshon pointed out.

"I know that." Lara replied, "He's bossy enough. But he's Cal, my annoying older brother and I'm never calling him 'master'. Ever."

Tyshon sighed.

"Much to learn have you young padawan." He said.

As Cal closed on the gunmen from behind he noticed a pistol in a battered holster on one of them and he smiled. The weapon was a pulse wave blaster of the same type Cal owned so he was familiar with its use. Carefully he raised himself up into a crouching position, ready to strike but with his head still below the level of the barrier on the other side of the gunmen and he extended a hand towards the holstered weapon. Without its owner noticing the blaster leapt out of the holster and flew to Cal's grasp and simultaneously he activated his lightsaber and fired the pulse wave blaster at its former owner.

"Now!" he yelled at the top of his voice as the startled gunmen ceased fire and spun around to face this new threat. A second shot from the blaster sent another man tumbling back into the barrier and sliding down to come a rest slumped up against it, while a swing of his lightsaber allowed Cal to slash across the chest of another.

Yivack raised his own pistol, but before he could point it at Cal the jedi stepped forwards and elbowed him in the face, knocking him backwards at the same time as he plunged the tip of his lightsaber blade through yet another of Yivack's men. Dropping the pulse wave blaster Cal then focused on his lightsaber alone.

*Panic.*

*Fear.*

With him being right amongst them he abandoned the idea of trying to shoot him from a distance and instead tried to find a way around his lightsaber blade to attack him in close combat. Cal moved quickly, not staying in one place long enough for any of his opponents to find a way around his weapon but at the same time not being able to land any more killing blows.

Yivack however retrieved the pistol he had dropped when Cal struck him and from a kneeling position he took aim, ready to put a bullet into the jedi if only he would stop moving for just moment. But then there was a yell from above and Yivack looked up to see Tyshon come bonding over the barrier, spinning in midair and he swung his pistol around to take aim at this new threat. Tyshon was quicker than him however and even as Yivack was still turning the jedi descended upon him and drove his lightsaber into Yivack's chest. Yivack's eyes widened and his jaw dropped as he had just enough time to realise what had happened before he fell forwards, dead.

The barrier was too tall for Lara to jump without risking hitting the ceiling right above it, so instead she attacked the barrier itself with her lightsaber, two downwards strokes cutting vertical slots before Lara channelled the Force into a single strong kick that caused the metal between them to collapse backwards and create a gap that she then sprang through.

Confusion now reigned amongst the few remaining gunmen. Their leader was dead along with more than half their number and the jedi were rapidly reducing even that, having trapped them between two separate directions of attack. One of the survivors was the man Yivack had earlier cautioned against using his grenade and now in a final act of desperation he reached for the explosive and pulled out the pin. His idea had been to threaten to release his grip if the jedi did not back off but before he could yell out a warning Lara suddenly lashed out at him without realising what he had done and her lightsaber blade cut through the arm holding the grenade. In horror the man watched as both his arm and the grenade fell to the deck, the lever flying away as soon as his hand opened.

*Fear.*

"Grenade!" Lara yelled as she too saw the explosive rolling across the deck.

Jedi and gunmen alike scattered, running in both directions along the corridor. Tyshon and Lara retreated back behind what was left of the barrier while Cal ran in the other direction. Seconds later he felt the heat and heard the sudden 'Boom!' as the grenade went off and something heavy struck him from behind causing everything to go black.

"Did either of you hear that?" Darrick said when he heard a dull 'crump' in the distance.

"Sounded like a grenade." Grayle replied.

"Would the jedi use a grenade?" Bartan asked.

"I doubt it." Darrick answered, "But then again I doubt Yivack would let any of our lot use one either."

"So who used it then?" Grayle asked.

*One of your own.*

The message from Praeten was sent into the minds of all three men and they winced at the sudden push of the Dark Side.

*You are all that is left now. The jedi will shortly reach my sanctum. You will follow my directions to it and we will kill them together. Then you will get your reward.*

The three men looked at one another.

"I've got a very bad feeling about this." Grayle said.

"Cal! Cal wake up!"

Cal awoke suddenly to Lara slapping him.

"Stop hitting me!" he yelled back at her, batting her hands away from him. Then he blinked, "The last thing I remember was a grenade going off. What happened?" he asked.

"Tyshon and I made it to the other side of the barrier." Lara answered, "Fortunately it was solid enough to resist the blast. Even if my ears are still ringing." And she pushed a finger into one of her ears and shook it about.

"So what about me?" Cal then asked.

"To one of our enemies do you owe your life." Tyshon told him.

"Huh?" Cal responded.

"It seems that there was one of them right behind you." Lara said, "He took the brunt of the blast and knocked you out."

Cal groaned as he picked himself up and then looked around for his lightsaber.

"Here." Lara said, handing him the weapon. Then there was one 'snap-hiss' followed by another as Cal activated the weapon to test it and then shut it off again.

"Right then," he said, "how about we go deal with this Sith spectre?"

## 5.

The chamber holding the main computer core was only a short distance away and was protected by a massive blast door that did not open when Cal tried the control panel beside it.

"So how do we get through this?" Cal asked Tyshon.

"Know that I do not." Tyshon replied, "Never have I opened it. Never before have I seen it sealed."

"The Republic engineers must have opened it." Lara said.

"Locked it was not then." Tyshon said.

"Oh yeah?" Cal said, "Well in that case I suppose it time to use the standard issue jedi master key. Opens all known locked doors. Permanently." And he ignited his lightsaber.

All of a sudden the door rolled back and Cal and Lara looked at one another.

"I guess we're being invited in." Lara said as she stepped through the open doorway.

Cal looked down at Tyshon.

"For some reason I keep remembering an old saying about something a spider said to a fly." He said before following his sister through the door.

The central core of Dorn Station's main computer was a pillar that extended from floor to ceiling about half a metre in diameter. Beyond this lay rows of storage drives and the equipment needed to store, pump and recycle the super cooled fluids needed to keep the computer running at optimum levels. Despite this dedicated cooling the builders of this place had still seen fit to set the ambient temperature much lower than the rest of the station as well, causing the jedis' breath to condense into visible clouds as they exhaled.

"Foolish jedi." A voice boomed out from all around, "You really think you can destroy me? Here in my own inner sanctum? I am Praeten Tyrr, Dark Lord of the Sith. The Conqueror. I beat them all you know. The Traveller as he wandered the stars thinking he held us all in servitude. The Scholar, cowering beneath the waves with his books. The Artisan and his army of toys. The Beast. Once mighty Sith lords all and now they are but scattered dust and forgotten memories. Not even those they ruled over in this sector now remember them. What are you in comparison to even the least of them?"

"We're the good guys." Lara replied.

*Anger.*

"Lara would you stop tormenting the forces of evil please?" Cal said, "It upsets them."

Tyshon smiled.

"Given us a sign your apprentice has." He said to Cal and he began walking towards the core, his staff tapping against the deck plating. All of a sudden the sound produced changed and Tyshon halted, tapping his staff against the floor, "Something more there is under here." He said.

"Lara your knife." Cal said as he drew his own knife from his belt and rushed to Tyshon's side. Kneeling down he began to feel around on the floor until he found what he was looking for, "Here!" he exclaimed and he dug the tip of his knife into the crack at the edge of the deck plate Tyshon was stood on. As Lara crouched own beside him and did the same Tyshon stepped aside and set down his staff, drawing his lightsaber instead.

There was a sudden 'Hiss!' and both Cal and Lara sprang back as the deck plate first dropped slightly and then slid away to reveal a hidden compartment under the floor. Rising up from within this hole came Praeten Tyrr himself.

The Sith Lord was sat slumped in a chair, his long dead flesh now mummified. But more significantly was the structure of his chair. It had a throne-like appearance and seemed to be carved out of pieces of crystal material along with numerous golden metal carvings set inside it.

"So this is him?" Lara asked, "Doesn't look like much."

"Look beyond the flesh you should." Tyshon said, "At the throne instead."

"Is this a holocron?" Cal asked, recognising the combination of crystal and electronics.

"No. Much more than that it is." Tyshon answered, "The means to extract the spirit of one strong in the Force it is. Allow him to focus his power still the crystals do."

"Then I guess that's what we destroy." Cal said and he activated his lightsaber.

"Such impudence!" the voice of Praeten called out and at that moment the Sith spectre materialised as a glowing white apparition and shot lightning from his fingers.

Surprised, Cal turned and used his lightsaber to block the attack, the lightning bolts crackling all around him.

At the same time there was a gunshot as Darrick and his men appeared at the doorway.

Tyshon reached out through the Force and took hold of Darrick himself. Calling the portion of the Force that flowed around Darrick back towards him Tyshon then dragged the startled man through the doorway and



hurled him against the nearest wall, careful to make the impact strong enough to stun Darrick but not to inflict any permanent damage.

At the same time there was a faint glow from beside the core that grew in brightness and reshaped itself into Praeten's spectral form. Gasping as she noticed the apparition Lara quickly regained her senses, drew her lightsaber and charged.

"Lara no!" Cal yelled but his warning came too late. Lara lunged forwards and the blade of her lightsaber passed effortlessly through Praeten. The Sith spectre simply laughed as Lara lost her balance and tumbled forwards, ending up sprawled over the floor with her lightsaber rolling away from her grasp.

"A foolish mistake. So typical of the Jedi." Praeten said and he raised his hands. Lightning shot from his fingers, heading straight for Cal. Fortunately the young Jedi knight's reflexes were fast enough for him to be able to bring up his lightsaber and parry the strike. Praeten laughed as he maintained the attack, lightning arcing around Cal's weapon as he strained to keep it in place.

"I've got him." Cal said as Tyshon turned to join him, "Just keep those guys at the door off my back."

"Protect you I shall." Tyshon replied, batting away a poorly aimed blaster shot.

Cal focused on the continuing attack, in particular on the lightning as it was blocked by his lightsaber. Despite appearances it appeared to Cal as something cold and dark, a creation of the Dark Side of the Force. But Cal was well practiced in channelling the Force for himself and he drew in as much as he could, channelling it into the blade of his lightsaber. There was a sudden 'Boom!' as the opposing energies met and the lightning was thrown back towards Praeten.

The spectral Sith Lord let out a scream and the lightning storm ceased abruptly as the image flickered. But as Praeten's form stabilised once more the angry Sith reached out to take hold of something to hurl at Cal using the Force, something that he could not simply cut down with his lightsaber or allow to simply smash into the wall behind him. That something was Lara.

She let out a squeal as she found herself lifted off the floor and propelled towards her brother. Cal saw this and lowered his lightsaber. Reaching out with his other hand he tried to catch hold of his sister even as she continued to fly towards him. But Praeten had channelled the maximum amount of power he could gather in such a short space of time and it was more than Cal could gather in response. Her flight slowed but not halted Lara slammed into Cal and the pair were thrown backwards.

Meanwhile Tyshon charged towards the still open blast door and with a sing of his lightsaber he sent a blaster shot back at its firer, striking the man in his chest.

#### *Panic.*

As the man fell his comrade realised that he was no match for the diminutive Jedi closing rapidly on his position and he turned to leave. But at the same moment he turned Tyshon launched himself at the gunman and a single stroke of his lightsaber sliced off his head. Landing at the same time as the headless corpse hit the floor Tyshon turned back around to see how well the Udras were doing against Praeten.

Tyshon was just in time to see the Sith spectre deliver a telekinetic blast that sent Cal sliding back away and into the wall. Cackling, Praeten continued to glide forwards, passing right over the prone form of Lara. Then he raised his hands again and more Force lightning erupted from them towards Cal.

#### *Pain.*

Cal could not suppress the agony he felt when the lightning enveloped him and as well as screaming out loud his pain was broadcast like a beacon in the Force. Momentarily overcome Tyshon flinched from this sudden input of dark emotion before he regained his composure and then threw himself in between Cal and the Sith spectre, his lightsaber aligned to parry the force lightning.

"A more experienced opponent you may wish to try." He said, glaring at the apparition.

"Tiny being." Praeten replied, "Your power is as insignificant as your physical size. Now die."

Behind Praeten Lara began to stir, roused by the shock of her brother's outburst of emotion. As her eyes flickered open she saw Cal still slumped against the wall, gasping for breath while Tyshon did his best to act as a shield against the lightning. However Lara could feel even the centuries old Jedi's strength beginning to fade. Looking around she could see no signs of her lightsaber and she knew that she did not have the time to go looking for it. Then her gaze fell upon the physical remains of Praeten Tyrr and she saw the scabbard at his waist that held a sword. At first it appeared as nothing but a normal blade, primitive but deadly in the right hands unless you happened to be fighting against an incorporeal being. But then she sensed something more in it; a coldness that came from the spirits of those whose lives had been ended by it and for just a brief moment she was certain that the weapon itself called out to her.

#### *Draw me.*

*I am yours to wield.*

*Use me to strike down your foe.*

*Together we are powerful.*

Lara flinched, recognising this as the lure of the Dark Side and then her attention was drawn to something else.

"I've got an idea." She muttered to herself and she picked herself up off the floor and turned to face Praeten, "Hey! Over here!" Lara yelled and she waved her arms at his glowing form, "What's the matter? Can't you see me from beyond the grave?"

Instantly the face of the spectre turned towards Lara, snarling and bearing what would have been Praeten's teeth had he still possessed a physical body. He raised his arms at Lara and extended his fingers. Once more lightning spat from the spectre, aimed at Lara. But the young jedi had sensed the build up of Dark Side energy just moment before he struck and she leapt into the air, somersaulting out of the way and landing well clear of the attack.

*Rage.*

Praeten screamed and the jedi all flinched as his emotion was broadcast through the Force. It was not the fact that he had missed Lara that had caused this, but because the moment she moved out of his line of fire he saw what his attack would hit.

The crystal matrix that channelled his essence.

The lightning ceased but it was too late to prevent it from striking the crystals. Designed to be attuned to the Force, they channelled the energy of the attack right through the bizarre device towards the metal components held within crystal. The energy heated these rapidly and there was a brief splintering sound as the crystal casing cracked.

"No! I will not die!" Praeten yelled, "I will not-" and then the crystals exploded.

*Panic.*

*Fear.*

Praeten's spectral form suddenly faded, leaving behind only empty space and the smell of burning from the crystals. Then came a sudden flash and a shower of sparks as the fire began to spread to the main core and Cal gave out a yell.

"We need the computer!" he exclaimed, "Lara quick! Extinguishers!"

Several fire extinguishers were mounted on the walls of the room, left behind by the Republic's engineering crews two hundred years earlier and both Cal and Lara reached out through the Force to call one to their grasp, "Let's hope these things still work." Cal said as he aimed his extinguisher at the main core.

Luck was on the side of the jedi and both fire extinguishers remained functional, sending thick clouds of carbon dioxide at the core and cutting off the supply of oxygen. However, even as the flames started to die away the fire was finally detected by Dorn Station's emergency systems and an alarm began to sound. At the same time there was the sound of a motor and the heavily armoured door of the computer room began to close, a move designed to isolate the fire and prevent it from spreading to the rest of the station.

Regaining his senses Darrick saw the jedi all distracted by the fire and decided he was unlikely to get a better chance. He launched himself through the doorway just as the blast door was rolling shut.

"No!" Cal yelled, rushing to try and head him off. But before he could reach the door Darrick was already through and the door slammed shut. Cal slammed a fist against the door in frustration.

"Cal forget about him." Lara said, "He won't cause us any more trouble. He doesn't stand a chance against us and he knows it. He'll probably just run back to whatever ship brought them here and leave."

"That's just the problem though." Cal replied, "What happens if he tells people about us? If word gets back to the Republic that we're here they'll come looking for us."

When Darrick burst back into the hangar where his transport sat he found a second ship waiting there and a group of people moving cargo from his ship to theirs. Immediately he recognised them as Uggaro the Hutt's people.

"Saren!" he called out to the woman in charge who was stood overseeing the transfer of cargo.

"Ah Mister Darrick." She replied as she turned to face him, "Where is Yivack?"

"Dead." Darrick replied, "They're all dead. We need to get out of here."

"Now calm down Mister Darrick." Saren said and it was then that Darrick took in what her men were doing.

"The cargo." He said.

"Yes, when none of you were here we thought we'd get things started." Saren said, "Of course I suppose that if you're the only one of your crew left then we can simplify things even further can't we?"

"What do you mean?" Darrick asked.

"I mean what's the point in paying for something we've already got?" and in one swift motion she drew a compact pulse wave pistol from under her jacket and shot Darrick dead.

## 6.

The jedi looked at the remains of the computer core. The fire had destroyed large sections of it and damaged even more.

"Can we fix it?" Lara asked.

"Sure." Cal replied, "It'll be easy. All we need is spare parts for a thousand year old computer built by an unknown alien species and an instruction manual written in a language we can understand."

Lara frowned.

"Well at least a lot of the data drives survived." She said, looking towards the rows of computer drives.

"Much information there is in there." Tyshon pointed out, "And without the main core to help, sorting through it difficult will be."

"We don't need to worry about that Sith any more though do we?" Lara replied, "I tricked him into killing himself."

"Do not be so certain young padawan." Tyshon said, "His essence I still feel in here."

"You mean he's in the computer itself now?" Cal asked.

"Always there he was." Tyshon said, "Only the power to appear in the real world did his crystal machine give him. Now somewhere in there he is. Spread out and weak." And he waved towards the drives, "Be wary you must if search the drives you do. Over time remake himself he may and tempt you he will try."

"Then I suggest we first concentrate on getting out of here." Cal said, "Come on Lara, let's see if we can get this door open without having to cut it to pieces." And the pair headed for the blast door.

Behind them Tyshon just watched as they prized open an access panel beside the door and began to pick through the circuitry behind.

"Hidden in many places the Dark Side can be." He muttered and he focused his gaze on Cal and Lara.

"Even in plain sight."

Darkness surrounded Praeten Tyrr and the only thing he could hear was a screaming that seemed to go on forever. He searched around for the source of this until he finally realised who he could hear screaming. It was him.

In his quarters at the Jedi enclave on Moldas Jedi Master Ben Karas was woken from his sleep by the sound of banging on his door. A quick glance at the chronometer beside his bed told him that it was still the middle of the night and he frowned. The banging continued and Master Karas got out of bed to answer the door. Standing in the corridor outside was a blonde woman in the uniform of a freedom warrior, the non-force sensitive soldiers that supported the jedi order. He instantly recognised her as Corporal Corlay Shill. "Corporal Shill? What is it that justifies waking me at this hour?" the jedi master asked.

"I'm sorry Master Karas." Corlay replied, "But we have an intruder."

"An intruder?" Master Karas repeated in astonishment. There were few individuals who would ever attempt to enter a jedi facility without authorisation and even fewer who could actually do it successfully, "Wait here." Master Karas retreated back into his chamber and dressed quickly, reappearing with his lightsaber in his hand.

"Take me there." He said to Corlay.

"We picked up an alarm from the administration section." She explained as she walked ahead of the jedi master.

"And our status?" he asked.

"The jedi are being woken." She replied, "And Sergeant Gall has sent reinforcements to make sure that Hargood Nollar remains secure. Keana went with them."

Keana Vreyes was Master Karas' own padawan learner and he did not relish her being close to the fallen jedi knight without a more senior jedi to watch over them both.

"Good." Master Karas said and then he saw three more jedi heading towards them.

Whillam Antess was a veteran jedi knight, older than Master Karas himself while the pilot Seth Ashran was much younger. Both were potent warriors and combined with Master Karas they made a powerful fighting force. The third jedi was Rich Kryne, Whillam's padawan learner. The young man held the distinction of being the oldest padawan on Moldas yet still being the most junior thanks to the late age at which he had joined the Jedi Order.

"Master!" Seth called out, "You've heard then."

About the intruder? Yes." Master Karas replied.

"Do we know who it is?" Rich asked.

"Be patient padawan." Whillam said, "For now we just need to concentrate on finding them."

"Could it be Cal and Lara?" Rich asked and the other jedi all glanced at one another, knowing that it made sense that only someone who had the ability to manipulate the Force for themselves would dare to intrude on the jedi enclave.

"We don't now that yet." Master Karas replied.

"Hang on." Corlay said suddenly, placing a hand to the communication earpiece she wore, "Got it." She added and then she looked back at the jedi, "Dac's just got to the admin section. He says there's no sign of damage to the main door but that's definitely where the alarm came from."

"We should hurry." Master Karas said.

The group made their way swiftly to the administration section where they encountered another group of people. Amongst them were the newly qualified jedi knight Dac Yale and Master Sergeant Jerad Gall, the most senior member of the freedom warriors on Moldas.

"Jedi Yale, Sergeant Gall report." Master Karas said sternly.

"The intruder didn't get in this way master." Dac replied.

"But this is where the alarm was triggered." Sergeant Gall added.

"How was it triggered here if there was no break in?" Seth asked.

"I think that the sensor was tripped from the inside." Dac said.

"By someone trying to get out?" Whillam asked.

"No." Gall answered, "It looks like it was triggered deliberately. Most likely by telekinetic displacement if the sensor elements."

"So we are dealing with a jedi then." Rich said and Master Karas scowled.

"No. Not a member of our order." He said. Then he looked at Sergeant Gall, "Get the door open." He ordered and Gall nodded to one of his men.

A moment later there was a hiss as the door slid open and the jedi in the group stepped forwards and began to advance down the corridor. As they went Dac edged closer to Seth.

"You realise that whoever's in here wants us to know they're here." He whispered.

"Yes Jedi Yale, that thought had occurred to me as well." Master Karas said, overhearing him.

Sergeant Gall's communications then activated and he paused while he listened to the message. Then he looked straight at Master Karas.

"Master," he said, "someone had just accessed our computer network from your office."

"Quickly." Master Karas said and he set off in the direction of his own office.

When they reached the door to Master Karas' office they found the door still closed and Corporal Shill briefly inspected the locking panel.

"Sealed." She said softly.

"This is not good Ben." Whillam said to Master Karas, "Whoever is in there penetrated our outer defences without triggering any alarms only to deliberately give themselves away when they got to this section. Then they broke into your office without triggering another alarm only to access our network openly."

"Yeah, I've got a bad feeling about this too." Seth said.

"Enough." Master Karas said sharply, "We will apprehend this intruder and then they will explain themselves to us. One way or another. Corporal, open the door." And there was a 'snap-hiss' as he activated his lightsaber. The other jedi followed suit.

With the freedom warriors positioned either side of the door and the jedi directly in front of it Corlay released the lock and it hissed open. Instantly the jedi burst through into the office while the freedom warriors filed in after them, spreading out along the wall and all facing Master Karas' desk.

There his high backed chair was turned away from the doorway and although the jedi could all sense that there was someone sat in it they had difficulty in picking out that person's presence in the Force.

"Turn around and-" Master Karas began, his lightsaber pointing at his chair. But before he could finish his sentence the chair spun a round to reveal a middle aged human male with a stern expression wearing jedi robes that were shades of grey rather than brown.

"Ah Master Karas." The man said, "So you do have at least some sense of security after all." And then he got to his feet.

"Who the hell are you?" Seth demanded. However, the man ignored his question.

"Are you really threatening me with those?" he asked, looking at the jedi's lightsabers, "Well perhaps I should respond in kind." And he reached into his robes to produce a lightsaber. His weapon was larger than those carried by the other jedi, being approximately twice as long. But when he activated it the emerald

green blade was of a standard length. However, he then smiled and turned the lightsaber sideways at which point there was a second 'snap-hiss' and a second emerald green blade extended from the other side.

"Well Master Karas?" the man said, "Its your move I believe."

Master Karas scowled.

"Stand down." He said.

*Anger.*

"Be careful of your anger Master Karas." The man said as the other jedi reluctantly shut off their lightsabers, "Anger leads to hatred and hatred leads to suffering. A path to the Dark Side."

"Who is this guy?" Rich asked, glancing at Whillam.

"Young man I am Tarris Blake." The stranger introduced himself as at last and he shut off his lightsaber and returned it to his robes, "Jedi Shadow."

"A Shadow here? But why?" Rich then asked.

"We weren't expecting you." Master Karas added.

"Nobody expects the Jedi Shadows." Tarris replied.

"Fear and surprise are amongst their weapons." Whillam said to Rich.

"Yeah and a fanatical dedication to the Jedi Code." Seth added.

"You still haven't mentioned why you're here." Master Karas said, staring at Tarris.

"Kyle Jenner. Lom Des. Hargood Nollar and now Cal and Lara Udra. Master Karas under your guidance it would seem that five jedi have fallen to the Dark Side and it has been decided that this warrants further investigation by my order. You have a plan to apprehend the Udras?"

"Yes." Master Karas replied, "I was going to send Jedi Battle Master Vrish Khal and his padawan Pedrus Ketam to the Narthis Sector to—"

"No." Tarris interrupted, "I will go to the Narthis Sector and I will locate the Udras. Then when I am done I will return here and discover why so many of your jedi in particular have fallen."