Escape from Joran

**Storage Closet**

**Abandoned House Kaerner Headquarters**

**Joran**

"Oh my."

A pair of lights flickered on in a dark storage bay. The humanoid droid looked around for a moment before pulling some debris out of the way and clambering to its feet. In some distant part of the facility, loud thumping and banging noises reverberated.

"That's new. Why are the lights off?"

The droid shuffled to the door, thumbed the control pad, and wandered out into the corridor to see what all the commotion was. He had not taken ten steps before he was tackled from behind and dragged into another dark room across the hall.

"Quiet, droid! You'll get me killed!"

The voice came from a young girl. Surprisingly strong for her size, she was dressed in cobbled together gear from many different sources. The droid immediately recognized several knives and blasters on her person, and identified the logos of several pirate, bounty hunter and smuggler factions on various parts of it.

"I am C-6A3, protocol droid. I am fluent in over six million..."

"Shut it, tin can. We're not safe here. Is there a way out the back?"

"No, ma'am. This facility is still under construction. Only the main entrance has been bored out so far."

The walls of the facility had been dug hastily by giant machines through the deep ice on the moon of Joran. Most of them had never been reinforced or insulated and were still made of exposed, bare ice. The crates of supplies that at one time occupied these storage rooms had mostly been removed, save for a few broken or empty ones still emblazoned with "House Kaerner" and the Tarentum logo on them. A startling realization began to dawn on C-6A3 as he surveyed the contents of the room.

"Is this no longer House Kaerner's headquarters?"

"House what? No, this place has been abandoned for a couple of years. Until just now, anyway."

"Abandoned? Are you not a Tarenti?"

"A taren-what? No, I'm a smuggler. Name's Kadne. They must have found out about me, but I can't figure out how..."

Voices and bootfalls echoed down the hallway. C-6A3 could discern four unique sets of boots.

"This base will do nicely, Raiju. It has been shuttered since House Kaerner was decommissioned?"

"Yes, my Lord. Completely unused since then."

"Master Raiju!" C-6A3 exclaimed, before Kadne jumped on top of him and held him down, covering his mouth with a gloved hand.

"Scion and Hades surely won't notice if we bring it back online again, so long as we keep the ship traffic to a minimum during the initial re-supply. I'm most worried about Oberst. He'll notice if we use any military assets. We may need to employ smugglers to augment our personal forces."

"I have to warn Master Scion!" The droid's expressionless face twisted helplessly as Kadne held him down and tried to cover his mouth. After a few moments the boots had moved on, and she let him go. She turned a fiery glance at the droid.

"What's this about a Rage-you and a Sine?"

"Master Scion is the Quaestor of House Kaerner. Was... the Quaestor of House Kaerner. I recognized Master Raiju's voice. He is plotting against Master Scion! I have to warn him immediately!"

"So, they're not after me?" Kadne's voice held a hint of newfound hope. "That means we could still get out of here alive. You help me with that, and I'll help you get a message to your Scone or whatever his name was. Deal?"

#### **Tarentum Momentum**

##### **FL3**

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The droid didn’t even process the question before answering “Deal Mistress, Scion will be most needing this information fast.”

Kadne then crouched and moved to peer out the crack as she watched the two strangers march down the corridor. She would have to try to avoid them but something about them told her they were bad news.

“ C6 tell me there is a way that we can get back to my ship in the hangar without running into those too again….” she pulled out her datapad and keyed the map she had been working on.

She had been living in this complex off and on for months. She ran the usual checks and no claim came back and even after camping the system for traffic. “Dumb luck” she muttered. As the droid looked up “ I need to access a terminal and download the data core. Then we can make our escape. “

The droid bumped into her from behind and Kadne pushed back “ Cool your jets servo boy we gotta wait till the coast is clear or do you want to get back to this ‘Scion’ in a heap”. The droid eased off and replied “ o.oof course mistress”.

She slowly opened the door to the closet and stepped out helping the droid as she pulled him towards the hangar ducking into an empty service station. She jacked the protocol droid into the terminal and let the droid do his work.

The droid turned his head in an odd fashion as he found something. “Oh my … Mistress if i may ….overloading the generators on the fifth level in precisely 10 minutes could give us the distraction we may need to evacuate this facility in time.” He sat there rigid waiting for a reply “ Sure sure just make sure there are no tractor beams or anything “.

C6 then pulled his finger out of the socket and started to shuffle down the hallway towards the docks. “Hurry mistress.. “ His hands were waving as he was moving and she followed it down the hallway.

Kadne was more stopped by the fear of running into the man that had just rounded the corner. It was Raju he must have doubled back. She cursed the droid as she tried to duck his lunge for her throat “I do not know who you are but there is no escape!”

“there is always an escape !” she spat as she turned and ran.

“YOU CANNOT ESCAPE!” Raju bellowed

She tried to move out of his lunge but he landed his hand on her arm piece. She clicked a button on her collar and it sent a charge throughout her wrist. “You think I’d let you get me!”

She shrugged free and broke into a run Pushing the droid ahead of her as she tried to make it thru the door. Kadane winked as the door slid shut and she shot the command panel. “ Lets move it droid we got a tail!”

To her surprise a glowing tip of a lightsaber poked through the door and cut a slow circle. “Great jedi. “. Her dream crushed. She closed and blasted every door she could. As she ran she keyed the autofire sequence on her craft, she had a feeling it was going to be a hot evac.

Raju was now not cutting doors but now was just slashing them open. He had to find this girl, and what looked like a protocol droid. If it was what he thought it was that droid knew too much to be nothing more than slag.

He then saw her up the hallway as she locked another door. *Not long now*… he leaped onto a crate next to the door and waited to attack. Using the force her gripped open the door and grapped the droid and flung him into the hangar. Kadne ducked and ran towards the ship taking cover.

The blast rocked Raju from behind with a bright white blast. The whole world seemed to be shaking as it was a large explosion.

Kadne held her ears as her watch beeped. The droid was rocketed across the floor into the port side landing strut .under her craft, splitting him at the torso. She scrambled to her feet and ran to the craft as she tried to pull the droid up the lowering landing ramp. “ You weren’t kidding about a distraction but did you have to kill all of us! “

Klaxons roared to life as now it seemed it was crumbling and on fire. C6 “Pull me into the ship hurry Mistress leave the legs “ She cut his wires and let the legs fall and pulled him in slamming the crash pad for quick air locking.

She then dropped him and scrambled for the cockpit. She slid into her chair and clicked her sequence. Keying her front weapon she blew the hangar door and engaged repulsers and pushed it through the burning hole.

There was a call on the comms. A voice came over her speaker “You do know blowing up a base with me in it is back luck right?” Kadne thought a minute as she keyed in the escape vextor to hyperspace and shrugged “ I don’t even know who you are buddy “

There was a soft click and then the voice returned “ Oh you will and you will fear the name Raju forever.” and the comms shut off with a squawk.

It didn't matter she pulled the lever and her craft shot off into hyperspace. She had made it, well this far at least. She stood up and went back to take a look a the droid.

He was a mess. His legs were sparking and he seemed to have a damaged his arm socket. She bent down to him and spoke “ looks like you could use more than an oil bath.. What's so important you wouldn't let me get your legs”

The droid voice was scratchy and he skipped a little “ systems check complete 46% operational… n.n.need service soon.n.n.”

She pulled him to her work table and started to work on closing the memory leaks and power outflows. It took a good hour to have his vocabulator and his power core stabilized enough to get some answers.

And there it was on the screen. Everything you'd need to clone an army and we just blew up half of it. She turned to the droid. “Do you know what you have done to me” she pointed to him “ You've killed me “ She watched as all the info scrolled forward on the screen. All the accounts and items. They were plotting to steal it all.

“You do not understand. Scion ordered me to defend at all costs. We must get to him” She laughed “ The only reason we are going there is because its the only place where i can get this sorted out… I'm not dying for you or anyone got it!”