fear itself.

1

The sleek ship glided through hyper space with its usual hum. Egregious was checking his data at the nav station as he sighed and looked over to his only travel companion for the last two years. CV-Rx was an unusual droid at that.

After promptly leaving Tarentum two years ago to pursue something inside himself to get out to the unknown regions, Egregious found the droid abandoned on a desolate astriod. He was still unsure if it was the force that made him drop his vector in that sector or just luck, who knows. But CV-Rx (or Rex for short) was becoming quite the companion indeed.

“Rex now tell me the truth, we are going to find what in this mine?” Egregious hated mines. Having been raised in one he really loved staying above ground where beings were supposed to be. But being a sith, this is not always the case.

Rex’s photo sensors blinked and his demeanor looked as if he was mocking him “ All indications of something unusual is happening on this one boss…” The droid had a thing for crime novellas on the holo vids these days. “ Seems that this mining company made a discovery of these inert crystals, then they started losing miners… see” Egregious rolled his eyes.

“Remind me to wipe your personality when i get time, you're starting to lose it again” he tapped a few keys and brought up the planet profile. Nothing too unusual about it. It was far of the normal space lanes thats for sure, but it was close to the maul. “So what is a few lost miners relate to sith artifacts then Rex?”

The droid taped a few more keys and a hazy video appeared on the small screen. “ lost may be a general term boss… “ and as the droid paused there it was. A miner running terrorized then just. Splat. “Did that guy just explode?” Egregious rubbed his chin.

Humans rarely just explode. And even when they do its not because of sith artifacts, well not usually. He reversed the vid frame by frame. And there it was clear as day. Just as quick as it happened he saw it strike the miner in the back. It was a sphere small but bright not unlike force lightning but much more …. explosive.

“Well it is unusual, what else do you got then,” he keyed up the data on the system. Rex was shuffling data cards and popped one into the slot. “ It is interesting it seems the crystals that were found seem to be the same that are used as a base for a sith holocron, and if refined enough for saber crystals. Not very interesting stuff, raw materials. But when the miners broke through a wall and into a cavern the report states that there were strange things inside. “

“Define strange “ Egregious said as he reached for his cafe. The droid made a click and his voice changed to something rigid and plain " unusual or surprising in a way that is unsettling or hard to understand. ‘children have some strange ideas’ ,”

Egregious just sat there as he gripped a bolt with the force and flung it making it collide with the droids head with the force resounding with a sharp ping “ cut it circut brain you know what i meant”

Rex reflexively rubbed the new dent in his domed head “ Boss you get me everytime,” he seemed to look like he was laughing with his eyes, as they were blinking oddly. “ The report state that there were some statues of robed figures, strange writing and the usual you know force stuffs”

Egregious sighed ‘force stuffs’ has had him spending the last two years roaming around looking for some artifact. He didn’t even know what he was looking for, just that deep inside him something was making him look. But then there was a tug “ Any pictures from inside the chamber Rex, something I can go on”

Rex tried to access the Mining company’s files, since they had acquired the mine at a pittance, everything was theirs. “No can do boss they cut outside access to the mine once we acquired the place per our orders. Remember you didn’t want those pesky Jedi poking their noses into our business.”

Egregious smiled. Small tests and the droid has proven himself over and over. “ Fine Rex then how did that get here” he was pointing at the vid that was being looped. “Ahh that well that is interesting, it seems a miner escaped, boss” Rex then tapped a few keys and a picture of a bent hume came up. He looked the part, dirty and missing teeth. Not a clean shirt to be found. “And who is that Rex and why isn’t he with the others in the habitat unit awaiting my arrival as per our orders?”

“It seems he escaped as our orders were being carried out.” he tapped a few keys and chart of a near by system was displayed “ He got a junked craft to this outpost, It is our first stop, boss” Egregious did have to give the droid credit, he did follow up on loose ends pretty quickly. “Right well get the kit together I need to meditate before our arrival”

Rex stood “ Sure boss anything I should prepare for “ Egregious lowered himself to the deck in front of the view port and crossed his legs. His eyes closed as he said “ anything and everything Rex as usual” As he spoke the last word he started to float.

 2

Egregious put the craft down in its predetermined spot as asked by flight control. The space port looked in miss repair. There was a large carter just at the apex of the yard, it also reeked of something rancid. Being falleen it was a hard adjustment but using the force he kept the stale air away from his nose and mouth purifying the best he could with his mind.

"Ok Rex, this seems to be the spot let's get you to a data terminal to see if you can jack in and download some local color" Egregious walked down the ramp of his ship and crossed the space dock to the nearest terminal and let Rex do his work.

Rex extended his hand and pointed his ring finger, then a data prong extruded and he pushed it into the slot. His demeanor changed as he started to work. He then gave off a ping " Found him boss. Seems like the junker just made it to the dock and he was rescued from his burning craft." The Droid then kinda bucked and stuttered "S.s.see.seems like security is on to uz". Egregious raised a brow and looked around " Covert operations Rex demand us not getting caught"

The droids eyes blinked red a second, then there was another ping. " Relax boss I got it, seems like the local dick is trying to figure out why this spacer ruined three levels of the dock when his junker exploded.” The droid cocked his head to the left “Seems like his ship exploded over there by those poodoo loaders and made quite a mess, at least it explains the smell... He left a trip on a search but I fried his terminal. I got what we need I suggest we move along". And with that he pulled the plug and moved away from the terminal and down a corridor.

"And where exactly are we going Rex". Egregious was keeping pace but the droid was making good speed. The upgrades Egregious made to CV-RX where extensive. On the outside he looked like a slightly thicker protocol droid but on the inside it was battle modified.

Rex switched to coms and spoke into the ear piece Egregious wore " They are moving out our quarry as we speak if we hurry we can catch them at the corner." Egregious moved faster " who and where Rex ". The droid moved faster to keep up " Who unknown boss, where it seems they are moving him off world... it seems we have a tail also." "Eliminate." He spoke grimly this was supposed to be a covert operation and it's already going upside down.

He leaped onto a crate and then up onto the roof. Rex turned and started to fire from his blaster equipped fingers and fired a grenade from his chassis. It stuck to the apex of an arch and as the two pursuers passed underneath it exploded causing the arch to collapse.

"Targets down boss, up keep your six covered….Roger.. Roger". Egregious made a mental note to block war vids on the ship when he got back. And leaped across to the next roof. His data pad pinged and he pulled it out it was displaying an overview of the city with the transport highlighted speeding down the street towards Egregious's location.

He then pulled out his blaster and a fixed a tracking dart and fired. It hit the roof and confirmed an attachment. Egregious then stalked the speeder to its destination.

Pushing the force into his legs he leaped from roof to roof as the truck winded through the streets. Then the speeder ducked into a building closer to the back side of the space dock. Egregious jumped to the street and ran quickly and rolled under the door as it closed.

He snapped up and lunged at the first to emerge from these speeder making quick work. Few jabs to the face and a gut punch took out the victim. He then did a flip to the other side of the vehicle and dispatched the second, only not before he got of a shot. The shot went wide but set off an alarm in the building as it it the fire suppression system.

Egregious cursed under his breath and keyed his com " Rex ready the Starland and get ready for rendezvous at these coordinates". There was was a sharp click then Rex’s reply " Rodger rodger boss eta two minutes. " Egregious opened the vehicle and to his surprise it was filled with a mobile bacta tank with their target inside. He then searched his two dispatched victims and heard the familiar whine of his craft hovering above.

He activated the repulsors in the bacta tank and shoved it to the garage floor and opened the secured door and pushed out into the street. He then flung an expose package to the speeder and shoved the tank onto his waiting craft. Closing it as Rex took off quickly.

He felt the explosion more in the force as the building collapsed. " Rex make for high orbit and then set a course to the grav field of this systems star. Also I need you back here to wake this being up."

3

Egregious shoved the tank to the back of the cargo hold as he then looked at the thing inside. It was going to be hard to get info from this one.

He was a charred mess. His ears and nose were melted into his face. As we're his fingers fused together. The bacta tank had robotic arms inside it that were teasing carded flesh from the damaged tissue. Rex came into the room and he then spoke " Fire seems to be most destructive to biologicals". Egregious then moved to the data pad on it that side. " Jack in and see what you can figure out as as set us a course to that mining complex. "

The Egregious felt it. The tug. Then the room faded and he saw flashes of the future, real or not he did not fight it just rode it out. He saw an old friend, a tareni, and he was in trouble. It would have to wait.

He shrugged it off and moved to the task at hand. He moved the craft to the jump point and pulled the levers and the craft was off. His com beeped. "Speek"

Rex’s voice came over the com " Boss I got him stable, but there is no way for this one to speak but maybe you can use your force tricks to communicate."

He rolled his eyes and stood from his command chair and walked aft to the cargo bay. Force tricks. At times the bucket of bolts made him chuckle.

He entered the cargo hold and spoke " we are underway taking a slower route but it should shake a tail if we picked one up." He handed Rex a bag " go through this it was on the guys transporting the jerky here" Rex took the bag and shuffled off to the bench in the corner.

Egregious then closed his eyes and opened himself to the force and reached out to the being in the liquid filled coffin. He felt the beings pain and torments and let it wash over him. Using it as a fuel as he probed the mind of the being.

He then pushed with his mind to make the connection and then he saw it starting to become clearer in his mind. It was like a kaleidoscope children use coming into focus and then he was in the mind of the being in much pain. He tried to keep it at bay but but it was futile as it was over taking him. He saw the cavern. And recognized the carvings. It was hard to dismiss Sith carvings of old. They were as distinctive and less than basic. The odd thing was that even though there was a huge room in cavern he felt confined.

In the center of the room was a dim red glow. He tried to walk to it but it seemed so far away, and it got fuzzy as he tried. He then pushed harder at the mind of his victim wanting to know what it was. He snapped up breaking contact.

To his surprise he was on the floor and Rex was shaking him. "What happened..." The bacta tank was leaking now. And there was an alarm coming from it. "Seems you didn't like what you saw boss you zapped it with your force tricks and then fell over" .

He rubbed his head " zapped.. " He looked at the display. Nothing but errors. He shrugged and spoke " Rex pull us out of hyper and Jetson this trash"

It seems he got the confirmation he needed Rex figured, and then moved the leaking mess to the airlock. " and I guess I get to clean all this up" . Egregious spoke as he moved to his cabin " as usual droid " . Rex clicked " as you keep reminding me boss"

4

Egregious sat on his bunk and opened himself to the force and focused on himself. He tried to pull the images from before in his mind. He saw distinct things and places but could not recognize them. He then relaxed and focused on the now dead miner.

His mind was then filled with the images he stole from the dead guy. He saw the vault he would say and the item inside. Amazingly clear now. It was as he thought a Sith holocron. How ever something was tainted here and it was something he was new to. Not many Sith had the power or the ability to even open them, not to mention the traps that were sometimes left inside. Either they were tests to see if the Sith deserved the knowledge or if they were protection. Who knew really. He then calmed himself and felt the ship thrust back into hyperspace.

Egregious rested for a while then wandered back to the cockpit. He sat next to Rex at his co pilot chair and looked out at the stars “ when we land you are to stay with the ship. If I do not return in three days time you are to find Scion and ask for his help.

“ Force stuff again boss I see… “ he sat there and clicked again as the ship reverted form hyperspace to find a desolate rock floating there. “Well we arrived boss and I guess since I am being left behind once again it will give me plenty of time to clean the cargo hold. Thank the maker I cannot smell.” his eyes flashed like laughter once more.

Egregious picked up his kit and walked to the cargo ramp. As they lowered in the atmosphere and headed to the coordinates Egregious supplied he opened the cargo door and watched the surface grow larger and then just jumped. He used the force to slow his descent and took the impact well enough. He checked his com and told Rex to monitor in high orbit.

Even though Egregious purchased the mine he still didn't want anyone to know what was inside. Having the one loose end taken care of already and his ship being watched by CV-Rx seemed like the probable solution. He made his way to the air circulation unit that was a click due west and made good time running there.

He made quick work of the access panel and climbed the long climb down the ladder into darkness. At the bottom he closed his eyes and opened himself to the force. It smacked him in the face, the tainted feeling did.

He knew it was further down the shaft at one of the deepest points but he was looking for other life forms. However the tainted feelings clouded his mind and it was like he was being drawn to it seductively like a beautiful song, singing just barely heard.

He pulled out a sphere from his robe and twisted it and pulled it apart. The screen had options that were quickly selected and then he set the driod down as recon. It would start to feed back maps and info of the shaft ahead. Taking his saber he thumbed it on letting the blade extend in front of him.

The red glow was lighting his way as he pushed deeper into the cavern. His bare feet and his form fitting combat suit as protection under his loose robe. His memories of childhood flashed in his mind and he stumbled. It felt like the force was just shut off. ‘*This can’t be’* thought, as he put his hand to the rock wall of the mind he got another flash….. Chamber….. BLue light… Flash…

He woke up on the floor of the cavern slumped over and he got up. Trying to focus on the force and draw it to him with no use. He clipped his blade to his belt and pushed on in the darkness.

5.

He saw light a head and heard murmurings. Strange sounds of horror and death. One sounded familiar like his old tormentor as a child laughing begging Egregious to come closer. He then tried to sense the room. Nothing. But he crept closer to the light to find himself at the opening to the newly discovered cavern.

He slinked to the opening keeping his senses sharp. As he peered into the cave opening he saw the carvings. They looked old but it was a wonder how it got into the asteroid like this. It was a wide circle with tall arches with as kneeling statue holding the glowing item.

He could hear the voices clearer now “*Boy you should run now…..HAHAHAHA”* The pain was abrupt and swift as the entity gripped him defenseless without the force he was trapped. HE struggled with his mind as he was gripped in the entity. His mind was invaded as he was tormented in the mental assault.

Egregios struggled to control his mind trying to focus. He was flooded mental of death and destruction of his family and friends over and over, brutally and more disgusting time and time again all the while being judged and laughed at.

He let the fear and hate consume him and well. He pulled it dwelled on in he spat curses at his tormentor. He then felt it surge within himself as he watched in horror. Everything he loved and cared about being ripped apart in his mind. So real so vivid. Filled with rage Egregious yelled “LEAVE ME THE KRIFF ALLONE!!!!!” out in great pain as the force within himself exploded forth freeing him and dropping him to the cave floor. He then zapped the object with his lighting and called his saber to his hand.

He approached the object and wrapped it in his cloak and picked it up. ‘*I guess its time i made my way back then…’*  He slowly crept back to his ship. He had to make his report quickly and to Scion only.