Arden couldn't help but look on with a little bit of smug satisfaction as the members of his former unit stormed off the Trandoshan operated transport and spread out to retake their ship. Of course losing it in the first place was a result of a bit of poor planning and stupidity, but that still made this particular carnage no less unpleasant to watch. While they slunk about the ship causing havoc and retaking key sections, Arden had his own plans. He stayed back with a small cadre of Jade Dragon mercenaries, waiting and watching for the right moment to move on their target. With Drax's forces now worried about the forces of Plagueis that were, because of the element of surprise, running rampant throughout the ship, that moment was upon Arden.

It wasn't just a lapse in the guard of his former allies, coupled with a whole lot of unnecessary infighting, that caused this particular situation. Something like this required an edge and probably several. Xander Drax was a brilliant tactician, that much was well known to Arden. He'd met the man in battle and seen him at work. Brilliant tactics can only get you so far though, especially when your outnumbered by forces that aren't susceptible to things like morale shocks. Arden figured they needed to have some sort of technical edge. A technical edge, that whether or not Vivackus knew or cared about, he was going to find. Since they were now the ones that would need every edge if they were to succeed, whatever means Drax used to achieve technical superiority would need to be neutralized and, if it was what the Ettian thought it was, turned around.

Back before they launched this attack, Arden had worked with Kz'set to infiltrate the ship's data networks and came across the work of what Kz'set thought was his former master. Why the Verpine wasn't here to deal with this matter himself interested Arden, but ultimately wasn't a major issue. There was the small matter thought that Kz'set might try something rash like killing Synin Torin. The way the Verpine spoke of his Bpfasshi mentor it sounded like there was quite a bit of pain and a budding rivalry between them. Having been around both Sith and oppressed individuals as long as he had, he knew that sort of relationship often ended violently. As far as Arden was concerned, killing Synin was a terrible idea. The Ettian wanted him alive and, preferably, as an ally. Plagueis needed him if they were ever going to get their possessions back and Arden needed him if he was going to get what he needed back. Therefore he needed something to convince the Bpfasshi to hear him out, and he had just the idea.

"Found it sir". One of Arden's mercs said quietly into the comm.

"Which one?" Arden whispered back .

"The courier. Seven meters, lurking in the corridor leading to Droid Operations."

Arden nodded. "I was hoping for the YVH, but that one will do. Take it down, I'll be right there."

Signaling to his remaining men, Arden skulked down towards the position of his scout that had located one of Torin's droids. Just as they got where they could see it, the distinct sound of ion grenades, modified to only immobilize their target, crackled and sizzled through the air. In a bright flash, the Ettian saw the distinct golden form of the ASN courier droid thump to the deck. Quickly moving over to the droid, Arden looked into the droid's optical relay, figuring Synin might be watching.

"Torin, I know you can probably hear me one way or another, so let me make this clear. We need to talk and it's a bit urgent. I regret what I have to do but sometimes radical measures are necessary. If you ever want to see your precious droid again, you'll come out of whatever hole you're hiding in and face me, alone. Yes, I know all about 'Needles' and 'Skulls' , so don't try anything or else, well, you wouldn't want this going off, would you?"

In clear view of anyone who might be watching, Arden attached what was clearly an explosive device to the courier droid before pulling the optical relay. If Kz'set was right, this would be sure to get a reaction from Synin. Arden's men fell into a defensive formation as Arden dragged the paralyzed droid into an alcove. It didn't take long for the Ettian's rather brazen stunt to get a reaction.

"It's a bio-neural trigger Skulls. You kill me, we all go, and what does that accomplish."

The YVH droid that Synin had uncreatively named stepped back a bit, glaring in a way only it could at Arden. "Nothing. My master wants to know why he would have anything to say to one who defiles his property. He also wonders how you know this unit's name"

Arden glared just as robotically back at the droid. "Second question's easy, we have a mutual acquaintance. Tall green bug person."

"Kz'set." The droid hissed.

"Something like that." Arden continued. "Anyway, the Verpine told me your master is an intelligent man. Probably is doing something to the droids, something which I'll be undoing shortly by the way, preferably with his help. Thing is, I think he's smart enough to realize that his team is probably going to lose here. It's only a matter of time until they find him. And then what do you think will happen?"

"I'll take out a few of them before they gun me down or slice me in half. I'd prefer the second one honestly, more fun." The form of a middle aged Bpfasshi appeared out of the doorway leading to Droid Ops. "But if you hurt Goldie..."

"Relax Synin, I don't plan to hurt your precious droids. I'm here to make sure they don't slice you in half." Arden answered.

"You're not with them?" Synin asked, obviously a bit skeptical.

Arden hesitated a moment before replying. "That's complicated. Let's just say it's an 'enemy of my enemy' kind of situation. I'm not a giant fan of Xander Drax."

Synin smirked in response. "Who is? I thought helping his little scheme would be fun, but he's keeping me from my real work. If I help you end this, you'll let me go? You'll let Goldie go?"

Arden simply nodded.

"It's a trick master, he'll just kill us the moment he has what he wants." Skulls interjected.

"Of course he will. " Synin answered. "But he clearly doesn't want me dead just yet. THEY do. Very well, what's your plan?"