**SBM Kz'set - #13299**

"Five,"

Being a place devoid of matter, about the only thing any being can readily sense in space is time. It passes the same for all, even those like I who can sense the Force.

"Four,"

We're getting closer now, closer to having to retake something that we lost because of one being's arrogance. And Vivackus is not here, I am. Typical.

"Three,"

It doesn't matter. He sent me to die once because of his cowardice. Why would I oblige him this time? Anything less than winning would.

"Two,"

He's already had a second chance at life, but will the rest of us? No. If we lose today, we're all dead. Or worse. Vivackus lost and got a second chance. We won't.

"One,"

It's time to do this. To take back the Anchorage from that kriffing nerf hugger Drax. He and those idiots he worked for played dirty. Well, I can play dirty too.

"Contact."

The monotone of the pilot's voice box pulled me out of meditation. Vibrations, likely caused by the shuttle's docking collar sealing to the Anchorage's hull rippled through my carapace. They snapped me back to the present. The here and now was clear. Aside from the pilots and I, there was only one other organic on the shuttle. I don't know why I trusted this Karn character more than any other living being right now. He seemed to want to help. So does everyone else that wants to kill you. Beyond that, I only have a single squad of B2s and a pair of BX commando droids to bring Drax down with. True, there would be other strike teams in other parts of the station. Doesn't matter. Can't assume they'll be any help. Drax, for all his arrogance, is actually a clever bastard. He'll have planned for an assault. He'll have defense. No, more than that even. Must expect a trap. Must expect several traps. All that being true, he's not the only clever bastard on this station. Or at least he won't be in a few seconds.

I have my own plan.

"Scanners say there's no enemy presence on the other side of the docking port." Karn said with what must have been a smirk behind his breath mask. What were clearly experienced hands keyed a command into the maintenance port they'd docked to creaked open with only some protest. "And, surprisingly, you managed to pick one that still mostly works. Guess there is a brain in your head after all, bug."

My tone stayed emotionless. "Pity more people don't realize that. Now, let's get on with it. Droids, forward."

Before I even finished speaking the shuttle's interior was full of the rattling of droids stomping towards the open access port. Efficient, good. A moment later, Karn and I followed. As expected, the corridor beyond the maintenance lock showed signs of millennia of disrepair. Several exposed wires dangled from the ceiling and dragged on the floor, their sparks providing the only illumination. Night vision devices were a good plan. Atmosphere, thin. Planned for that, main reason for bringing droids. Despite the damage, corridor mostly clear. Good, all the easier.

"So where's this edge of yours Verpine." Karn hissed impatiently. Would have expected more faith from him.

"One deck above us and one section towards the secondary docking bay. Schematics from the computer said there was a usable lift shaft a hundred meters," I took a moment to get my bearings before pointing to the left, "that way."

Without being told, the droids tromped in that direction. Despite being efficient and heavily armed, they were loud. The BXs, quieter, swifter. They were at the shaft first. By the time the rest of us arrived, they were already assessing the shaft. They looked back to me. I nodded and they pulled out ascenders and shot them up the shaft and, once they took hold, whizzed up the shaft. A moment later, I felt a twinge in my antennae. I nodded to Karn a moment later.

"They say the shaft is clear, but the door needs power. Or a bomb. I'd prefer the quiet way."

Karn looked at me quizzically. "They did?"

"Maybe in a few dozen generation you'll evolve a built in commlink. Come on, help me find the power board."

Karn raised an eyebrow and then started looking around for a way to restore power to the lift doors. We found it quickly. Surprisingly quickly. There was a power tap to the secondary reactors nearby. Quick power trace, yes, those where the wires. Pulled out tools, quick solder here. Splice there. No, wrong one. Red wire, that's it. My antennae twitch. Success. I gesture to the shaft as the B2s fire their ascenders. Karn shakes his head.

"You bugs are just full of tricks."

"I've lost count of how many Imperial pilots have said that," I replied. "Shall we join the droids or do you want to stay down here."

No matter how many times I do it, ascenders still worry me. Single point of failure. No redundancy. Painful result for failure. Still, only option in this case. I try not to think about it as I rise up the dark shaft. Seven seconds, five, three, at the next deck. Back on solid deck plate. Thank the Force. I point down the corridor to the right and the droids assume an assault formation. The commando droids move in front, scouting. Still dark, but also still empty. Hopefully Drax hadn't noticed what we are searching out. He hasn't had the time with the databanks I have. They have told me much of the dark parts of the Anchorage. I haven't had time to delve as much as I'd like. Too busy leading. Keeping order. Yelling at Brimstone. Paperwork, all the paperwork. But now, I have a chance to come down here. There's something here we can use, hopefully. If the databanks were right anyway. And a bunch of other things have to go right. Still, it's a chance worth taking. Very few aren't at this stage.

After a few moments the commando droids have found the room. I told them what to look for, but not Karn. Couldn't trust him, not fully anyway. I catch up to the droids. One points at something in an older form of Aurbesh. I nod quietly as Karn approaches. He looks at it too. Then at me, eyebrow arched.

"You have to be kidding."

I turn to look at the Ettian. "As Teylas would say, I don't have a sense of humor."

Karn chortled. "Neither does he. Well, let us hope this gamble of yours works and doesn't get us killed."

I look at the label by the door and smile to myself. It's exactly what I've been looking for.

War Droid Storage.

The B2s had to pry open the stuck door. Unsurprising in the slightest. Once it did open, I was not disappointed. The databanks had entries about an area near one of the docking bays were combat droids were kept. The previous owners of the station seemed as fond of mechanical soldiers as I am. What was more interesting is that they had said some remained powered. As we pressed into the room, I saw dozens, hundreds of mostly lifeless droids of several shapes in the cavernous room. Parts strewn about everywhere. Lifeless eyes stared out of the darkness. A fair number of the ancient war droids were well preserved. Some of my people would give their left antenna to get in here. But this wasn't an archeological expedition.

"Well, would have been nice if we'd found this place sooner." Arden stated with disdain. I didn't even respond with a look.

"This section was one of the hardest to get to, from the inside at least. We'd started to clear a path only recently, then, well, you know the rest."

"You mean first Ashen's Crusade and then that little misadventure over Korriban." The Ettian seemed to have particular disgust at the first part. He had good reason to be.

"At least you weren't fighting with the idiotszzz."

We pushed through scattered debris towards a particular alcove on the far side of the room. The presence of faint lights pointed the way to what I had read about. This was the first group of droids with any sign of life. When Karn saw them, his jaw dropped.

"Are these what I think they are?"

I nodded. "Sith War Droids, Mark II I believe. Fifteen of them that had been fitted with special batteries and stored in a hibernation state. The data suggested they were supposed to be the guard of one of the Darths of the period and were modified accordingly. "

"And you think they'll take orders from you? Assuming that they still work." Karn asked.

I had already moved towards one of the units that seemed to be the least damaged. They looked remarkably like modern Droidekas. Just as well armed too. They'd be most useful. I started accessing the cranial unit and looked around. Largely intact. Had to replace a few wires here and there. Power cell largely working. Won't last long, but didn't need to. Hooked up datapad. Core programming still there. Diagnostic functions, present. Taking a moment to mesh readouts. Old programming, less efficient. Some holes, but should function. Weapons, should work. Entering reset command, done. Crainial unit closing. Reboot commencing.

Karn has rifle at the ready. He doesn't have faith. My hand goes for my lightsaber. I guess I don't either. Seconds pass, the droid powers up, whirrs to life. Clanking loudly it slowly looks up at me. It's low mechanical tone fills the room.

"STATUS."

I nod approvingly and look it right in its optics. "Bodyguard."

"COMMANDER"

"Lord Kz'set." It understood titles like that. More likely to get respect. I also always wanted to say that.

"MISSION"

I smile at it with what must look like unrestrained glee. "Mission" I can't help but chuckle. "We're going to war."

The droid stood up a bit taller as if it was equally excited. "WAR!"

Karn stood dumbfounded as he looked on, ready to shoot at a moment's notice. "So, can I turn on the next one?"

I stare at him, smile not leaving my face. "As long as you make sure it shoots at Drax. But hurry up, I think our new friend wants to shoot something."