*Reconciliation*

-- Scion Tarentae (9335), July 18 2015

The shuttle rocked in the air as it was buffeted by the driving wind and rain of Yridia III. Another hurricane in a chain of seemingly unending storms was blowing past this small mountain outpost. The shuttle's computer fought to keep it steady, but the pilot had to pull hard on the yoke at the last moment to keep from scraping the craft against the side of the hangar door. The magnetic shield came up as soon as the shuttle was inside, causing it to rock violently in the other direction as the gale force wind was instantly becalmed.

"Sorry for the rough ride, Sir."

The pilot's apology went unheeded. Hades stood quietly and straightened his uniform while the shuttle's door ground open and thudded on the deck. Without hesitation he stalked off the ship and across the hangar, leaving the pilot to prepare the shuttle for the return journey alone.

Scion's private workshop looked smaller than it was. Mechanical parts from droids and other machines littered nearly every surface, stacked up on shelves and piled in the corners leaving just a narrow pathway from the door to his large workbench. The surface of the workbench had a large datapad built into it where he could write or draw designs. Each of the parts and small assemblies that were laid out across the surface of the table was highlighted and identified by the workbench, and next to some of them were holonet articles he had looked up. It would have been apparent to any experienced engineer that the owner of this work station was a novice, trying to learn through experimentation and research.

"You'd think he was a frakking Krath," Hades muttered as he made his way across the mess.

In the valley below the mountain outpost was a small village populated by a humanoid species indigenous to Yridia III. Their town was comprised of a collection of low duracrete buildings with slanted roofs to shed the almost constant barrage of wind and rain. Fresh water had never been a problem, but traditional farming had proven difficult over the settlement's history and their civilization had never been allowed to thrive. Until recently most of the town's resources had to be gathered by hand from the surrounding rainforest. It was a dangerous and time consuming task that involved the efforts of every able bodied villager. The forest was rampant with gigantic creatures, many of which were armor plated, carnivorous and eternally hungry.

Today the villagers were gathered in the center of town, huddled in the rain around one man. A ghostly purple glow surrounded him and the rain that fell into it simply hissed into steam and evaporated. His jet black robes sparkled with energy, but were clearly dry. Scion's arms were outstretched as he promised the villagers protection from the giant beasts and a time of plenty in exchange for their unwavering devotion. Behind him, an immense beast seemingly made entirely of armor and razor sharp spines materialized out of the mist. It was headed directly for the village. The people cowered, terrified, as the black-robed Scion smiled benevolently.

"Witness, my children," his voice boomed through the storm. "I have teeth of my own. And they are much, much sharper than his."

He floated up into the air, turning toward the oncoming behemoth. In a flash, dual crimson blades erupted from his hands and he flew at the monster. Within 60 seconds he had driven the beast back into the churning mist beaten and bloody. The villagers cheered enthusiastically when he turned to face them again.

"What I ask of you today, my sons and daughters, is sacrifice." Silence. He waited a moment to let them imagine what that statement could mean. He could feel their questions and the tension in their hearts. Would he ask for their prayer? Their food? Their shelter? What could they possibly have that this God would want? "You will send your daughters to me in my mountain temple when they are of age. Fail to do this, and the beasts will certainly have you."

Their dismay fueled him. *Nothing helps a bad mood like spreading it around.* It was an adrenaline rush like he used to get commanding troops in battle, but there was something about taking advantage of these primitive, defenseless people that was even sweeter than a decisive victory.

Demonstration over, it was time to go. He raised himself above the gathered crowd and floated toward the temple he had made them construct for him. Once inside, he slipped through a small section of holographic wall and back into the deeper recesses of his compound. Eventually, he wandered back to his workshop.

"What are you doing here?" Hades asked when they met. "Playing God to some villagers? Building... whatever all this garbage is? What happened to Tarentum? To flying? To your friends and brothers? They need you."

Scion shrugged. "Can't a guy take a vacation?"

"A vacation? I just saw on your security net that you asked them to start sacrificing their young girls to you. What the frak was that? Do I even want to know?"

"It's not what you're thinking. I'm just gonna have them work in the temple for awhile, then I'll send them back. You know, to solidify belief in the religion. The girls will bring my teachings back to..."

"The religion?" Hades interrupted. "Your teachings? Do you even hear yourself right now?" He was growing more and more agitated. "I don't care about the people down there, but being Prince changed you. You may have delusions of grandeur, but you're still just Scion to me. My partner. My apprentice. I'm telling you this as your friend. Tarentum still needs you, but you're out here wasting your time in the middle of nowhere playing God. I know you're still pissed at Grand Master Pravus for firing you, and I understand that, but get your frakking priorities straight."

"You don't get to talk to me like that anymore, Hades. I'm a Tarentae now. And a God. I'm not your apprentice anymore and Tarentum seems to be doing just fine without me. Better even."

"A God, huh? We'll see about that."

Hades' violet blade snapped into life and lashed out violently at Scion's head. The Battlelord sidestepped, bringing his blaster from its holster and letting three shots fly at near point blank range into his friend's chest. Hades fell backward into a pile of jagged metal parts, his lightsaber clattering down underneath a pile of wrecked droid limbs. His body was still save for a wisp of smoke rising from the holes in his chest.

"Yeah. I'm sure we will."

Scion turned to sit at his desk, starting to work on building a small device with dozens of parts. His work was slow and methodical, and he was so focused on his project that he didn't notice when the injured Hades struggled to his feet and limped out of the room. It quickly became night and then morning again before he completed his work: a small round droid about the right size to fit in one's hand. It rolled around the workbench interfacing with the outpost's computer systems to gather information and learn about its surroundings.

After a few minutes of processing and downloading data it suddenly spoke in a high pitched buzzing voice: "Hello Boss. We've got company!"

It was true. Scion checked the security net's cameras just in time to see villagers climbing up through the holographic wall in the temple. Beyond that there was a door with a security keypad, but on the other camera it looked as if that was already open and people were filing through.

"Hades. He must have turned the villagers against me. I should have made sure he was dead when I had the chance."

The Sith exited the workshop and turned down the hallway just in time to meet face to face with a cadre of villagers. They were armed with pitchforks, torches and vibroblades and led by Hades. He looked pale, but very much alive. His weapon was already drawn and the villagers were looking to him for a signal.

"We can end this right now, Scion. Come with me, get on my ship and let's go home."

Shots rang out from Scion's blaster, but Hades was ready this time. He deflected them back down the hallway and Scion had to dodge to miss them. The third one caught the Battlelord in the side. He holstered his blaster and reached a hand out, wrenching a pitchfork from one of the villagers' grasp with the Force and catching it out of the air. He heaved it back at Hades who instinctively dodged. It sailed past him and lodged in the chest of one of the men standing behind him, who was instantly killed. A furious roar erupted from the crowd, which surged forward and enveloped Hades.

Crushed under the weight of hundreds of bodies, he began swirling his blade in narrow arcs and cutting down villagers. When the front runners reached Scion he already had both blades bared and hurled himself down the corridor into them.

The two Tarenti met in the middle. More villagers were still pouring in. Old habits die hard. Two crimson blades joined the violet blade as the two friends battled their way inch by bloody inch down the hall and back into the temple. When the fight was done, the blood had already formed a stream running out the entrance to the temple, down the staircase and down the path into the village where it collected in the storm drains and gutters. The two men stood facing one another for quite some time after the last villager fell, hardly recognizable as human at all. Their faces and clothes were covered entirely in red. Their blades were the only sound that could be heard above the thunderous downpour.

A grin spread slowly across Scion's face. "I guess you win, Hades," he said. "I'm not a God." Hades breathed a sigh of relief as Scion continued. "There's no one left here to worship me. Let's go home."