**The Lone Knight**

**By: Eetherbiail Dossier #11484**

           Eetherbiail had been tasked by his Emperor to go after Vanis by himself; the blasted creatures that he had awoken were running amok, taking ninety percent of Clan Scholae Palatinae’s force with them. They had a duty to their System to protect it, even if they were their overlords. Eetherbiail had been dropped near a small inlet surrounded by a Forest deep within the mountains; it was roughly 20 miles from the city where one of the monsters was wreaking havoc in a pack.

           A loud, angry shrill rose through the air in the silence of the morning, and with more calls echoing behind the first, sending shivers down Eetherbiail’s spine. Eetherbiail silently and slowly shook his head to get back into his senses, he had a vital mission to accomplish, and worrying about those fighting the monstrous beasts were others to deal with. If Eetherbiail succeeded, he could save many lives.

           He strode to the edge of the inlet where a small hole opened up in the deep foliage, broken twigs and blood scattered around the entrance, “You must have gone this way, huh Vanis? You better be alive, because I am going to enjoy skinning you alive for all that you’ve done.”

           Following the trail of destructed foliage and spilt blood, Eetherbiail journeyed through the jungle, darkness seeped around him, and animals called around him. He was tasked to go it alone by his Emperor, deep within the jungles to ascertain what Vanis had done in order to release the Monsters on his world. Eetherbiail’s hand rested against his lightsaber as he pushed through the broken branches and followed Vanis’s path. It was a slightly awkward gate, slow paced, and odd; however, Eetherbiail felt better knowing he could grasp his protection in a moment’s notice.

           The pathway darkened as the foliage thickened, leading towards a small opening in the rock face. He peered inside and Eetherbiail paused to debate if he wanted to ignite his lightsaber for illumination, or wait for his eyes to adjust to the darkness naturally. In the end, he opted for the adjustment; to save him for night blindness should the pathway brighten suddenly as he ducked his head and pushed onwards.

           The tunnel twisted and turned as Eetherbiail delved deeper into the small rock face, Eetherbiail mused how long it would be until he reached the clearing in the Forest that Intel had described. The pathway started to ascend and released Eetherbiail into sudden brightness. The opening revealed a perfect looking circle of trees, save for the tiny opening of the exit of the tunnel. The grass was bright green, healthy, and swayed with a light wind. Eetherbiail glanced up, trying to figure out if the wind was making its way through the thick trees or from above when he noticed the center of the field.

           In the center of the small field stood a cylindrical pedestal with a severed arm on top of it; blood dripped down the side facing the exit where the appendage was severed jaggedly. Eetherbiail noted aloud, “who knew that much blood poured from a single arm huh?”

           A chuckle came from the other side of the pedestal, causing Eetherbiail to move quickly around the circle; he grabbed his lightsaber in his hand and stared at Vanis, “Who knew cutting your arm off would cause that much pain too.”

           “So that’s what you did? You had to sacrifice your flesh and blood to revive or unlock the seals on those blasted monsters? Why did you do it before you go there?”

           Vanis coughed, “Ritual claimed you needed to feel pain before giving it up, to walk with the deed already done, no backing out. Have you ever walked with your arm in your hand? One elongated limb? No, of course you haven’t.”

           The Sith narrowed his eyes at the man who lay in a crumpled heap, holding his bleeding stump close to his chest, “You will tell me how to reverse this.”

Eetherbiail ignited his lightsaber with a *snap-hiss* and strode towards the cowering Vanis. With a sinister grin, he looked down at the miniscule man, “After all this trouble you’ve caused, you’re about to finally pay the price, slowly, agonizingly, and painfully. You will tell me how to reverse this, no matter how long it takes.”

           He grinned down at the man shaking so violently, from blood loss or fear, Eetherbiail neither knew nor cared.