

## Sins of the Past

*Estle City, Selen*

*(Near) Kordath's Apartment*

"..still say you just toss him over into the pool. Not like he doesn't deserve it."

Kordath groaned in his sleep, words filtering in from the outside world, breaking up the lovely dream he was having. Twin Twi'leks twirling together towards the tub. It was a work of art inside his brain, which is probably why it was twisting and weaving. Though why there was a tub at all he couldn't understand. Alliteration, part of his brain tried to speak up, but it was drowned out by the annoyances from the waking world.

**"I'm aware of what occurred, young Sprout! That is the only reason I'm allowing you to use the bucket, a manner of waking drunkards that's been passed down the Garmis family line for generations! You deserve the honor after last night, most certainly."**

The second voice boomed and rattled his brain, causing the lovely scene before him to quiver and fade. He tried to chase it, reaching out to grab a fleeing lekku, only to watch the entire image shrink and implode. Then the entire world went goopy as he was shocked awake, sputtering as water tried to fill his mouth and nose.

His first sight in this new, unpleasant place was the Falleen midget, Sprouts, holding a bucket and looking smug. Strong, his other Fade, the big Chiss, was standing behind him with muscular arms crossed. Why the large man had a look of disappointment on his face, Kordath didn't know. Yet. He was certain Strong would inform him. Loudly. Before he had a chance to have a nip to settle the hangover that was already crashing like waves against his gut and head. Another figure stood nearby, black coat and boots, serious face.

"Wassa goin' on," grumbled the Ryn, lying back in the puddle he'd been splashed with. "Why'sa DIA agent here?"

He blinked a few times, "And why's we outside?" he asked, noticing that they were on the walkway that ran around the inner ring of

apartments. His own was just over there, behind the dour looking agent type.

**"We are outside, Master Bleu,"** bellowed the Chiss, causing Kord to curl up and cover his ears in desperation, **"Because you decided this was where you would sleep last night! After your meeting with the Consul you felt a desire to, I quote, "hit up the ole' waterin' hole" while you were still in Estle City. Whatever you had left for an operations fund for this month has been spent on covering the tab. Not to mention the damages! We got you this far before you declared you'd be sleeping under the stars."**

"Ya didn't try ta drag me inside when I fell asleep?"

"I did," growled Sprouts, still gripping the bucket in a manner that made Kordath nervous. "You, barely opening your eyes, picked me up with the Force and tossed me over the railing! Into the pool!"

"Least it wasn't the bleedin' ground," he muttered, sitting up and rubbing his head. "What about spooky over there?"

The Human agent stepped forward, his boots clicking loudly on the duracrete, at least loudly to Kordath. "Master Bleu! Your presence is requested in Korda City, the Zratis Arms Manufactory's warehouse has suffered, well, it's been blown to hell, sir."

"Cut the Master, cut the sir, start over," he growled, patting his sodden clothes, looking for his smokes. He looked up to find Strong holding a single one out to him, a look of disdain on his face. The Fade didn't approve of the habit. Blowing a stream of smoke out, the Ryn sighed and pushed himself up to standing. "Somebody blew up a plant?"

"Not the plant, no sir, the finished product warehouse."

"Why would a loon blow that up, steal the bleedin' cargo! Weapons are always worth credits. Now who's requestin' me presence?"

"Si--I mean, uhh, Mister Bleu, the order comes from the Citadel, it has the Shadow Lady's seal."

"Grand, bloody grand, shoulda hopped the shuttle back to Ol'val last night," he muttered, looking at the document with bleary eyes. "Ya got a transport waitin'?"

"Yes Sir, I mean, uhh, yes, a shuttle is waiting for us at the spaceport, umm, you're turning quite pale..."

"Kord doesn't fly so well," spoke Sprouts, a look of glee on the small man's face.

"Kark it, turn the tint to full, get me half a dozen liters of caf on board. Lemme change into somethin' dry first," stated the Ryn, glaring at his diminutive Fade. "I think I'll skip the shower, sorry lads, sounds like an emergency."

He entered his apartment in search of cleanish clothes, smiling as he heard both Fades groan in realization. When questioned by the Agent, they simply mentioned 'smell of a wet rat'. He'd figure it out by the time they made it to Korda City.

Thirty minutes later the hungover Ryn was sipping a steaming mug of caf, staring at the ceiling of the shuttle and pretending it was a speeder bus. He also affected to ignore the smell, knowing it was himself but blaming Sprout and Strong. The Agent wasn't much help, looking pale in the corner after handing off a datapad to the Ryn.

Kordath was swiping through images that had been taken of the scene, a bomb of decent power had level the warehouse. From the way the wreckage was laid out, it looked as if the blast had come from inside.

*Worker planted it? Or somebody broke in?*

Flicking through to the preliminary report, he skimmed, picking out quickly the mention of finding the security guards on duty dead in the wreckage.

*Stabbed in the back, slashed throat, not a worker then. Somebody broke in and planted the bomb, sloppy work, good sized explosion though. Professional but in a hurry. Hope they left something behind.*

Wishing he could have a smoke with his caf, Kordath closed his eyes and sighed. He hated flying, he hated shuttles, he hated being back

on Selen where everyone watched him out of the corner of their eyes. His time spent under the machinations of the Perdition forces had left a sour taste in most people's mouths when they saw him. A tone played over the intercom, and the Ryn roused, realizing he'd nodded off at some point.

Taking a sip of his caf he grimaced, it'd grown cold, which meant...

*"We will be landing in Korda City in five minutes, please fasten your restraints and return to your seats. Thank you, for flying Air Selen."*

"Karkin' finally," he muttered, stretching as best he could in his seat, trying to work his tail's circulation back up, wedged in the back of his chair as it was. Tapping his feet impatiently, he could hear the landing gear cycle as the shuttle settled down. With a sigh he watched the hatch hiss open, and knew his day could only get worse.

The Fades stood to follow, Sprout carrying an awkward bag over his shoulder.

As soon as Bleu stepped off the transport he knew he was right, gagging as the fragrant air of Korda City hit him. The Ryn hated this place, the manufacturing center of the planet was in perpetual smog, it was brighter at night when all the lights reflected from the dark sky then during the day. With a sniff, Kord squinted his eyes, hoping the burning sensation would go away, and knew that he'd spend the next week in the refresher scrubbing this smell out.

The Agent lead them from the shuttle to an enclosed speeder, settling in for yet another boring ride. As they road, the serious looking black jacket tried to brief him on the situation, repeating what was in the datapad. He also felt the need to mention that 'Zratis Arms Manufacturing was a company that manufactured weapons.'

"What would we do without the DIA," muttered the Ryn under his breath as the speeder came to a stop. With a groan he and his Fade's exited, the Agent giving them a nod and closing the door as they got out. Kordath turned to find himself face to chest with a tall Human who looked surprised.

"Master Bleu, thank you for coming so quickly!" stated the man, speaking to Strong and extending a hand.

Kordath looked from the Fade, who had the decency to blush just a tad, and the Human DIA Officer.

"Oi. I'm Bleu. He's with me."

The man's face swiveled down and recoiled in surprise at being presented with the Ryn's mustachioed visage. Said mustaches were quivering in indignity as he glared up at the officer.

"My..apologies, Master Bleu, I, ah, well. Sorry. I didn't expect you to be so, well...small."

"Blow it out yer arse, smoothskin, you got anythin' to actually show me here? Besides the smokin' crater behind ya."

"Well, ah," the officer blinked, trying to ignore the smells wafting up from the Arconan as he spoke. Stale cigarette smoke, alcohol and caf, mixed with the smell of wet hair and the general smog of Korda City did not make for a pleasant scent. "One of the forensic teams found what we believe to be the device that caused the explosion."

"It's called a bomb, ya git," growled Kordath, watching the man wave at a figure in a white jumpsuit, who came scurrying over with a clear bag filled with mangled electronics. Another growl followed as the forensic officer tried to hand said bag to Strong. Bleu tore open the do not tamper seal, much to the annoyance of the white suited man, and dumped the contents out on the ground to squat over them.

"Well then, lesse who done what," he muttered to himself, picking up pieces and focusing on them with the Force. Kordath's forehead bunched up as he concentrated, trying to ignore the lingering effects of his hangover and annoyance with the DIA. Picking up impressions and past events from an item was a new technique to the Ryn, he was still getting used to it, still he was able to glean something from it.

"Smoke."

**"Do you really think this is the time, Master Bleu? It could contaminate the scene or--"**

"Not a smoke, Strong, smoke, somebody was smokin' when they set this bloody thing up," stated Kord, scanning the ground around them. "Too

pungent to be a cigarette. Cigar? Cigarillo? EVERYBODY LOOK FOR A BLOODY CIGAR BUTT!" he shouted. "STOP BLEEDIN' MOVIN' ABOUT AND LOOK AT THE GROUND YA THICK SKULLED BUGGERS!"

Despite his shouts to not move, his mangling of the Basic tongue not helping, people shuffled about in small circles, staring at the ground. Kordath felt frustration well up even as he channeled the Force to his own eyesight, his vision darting about the area, trying to find some trace of what he'd smelled in the psychometric reading. A tingle at the back of his mind told him to turn around, just in time to see Sprouts pluck something from the debris ridden ground.

"Ah! Little Green! You found it? You are closer to the ground, so I suppose that makes sense, eh?"

"Always a short joke," muttered the midget, holding up the burnt and frayed cigarillo butt. Kordath hopped to his feet and snatched it from his hands, holding it up closer to examine it, sniffing.

Licking his lips he glanced at his two companions, one blue, the other green, "Well it smells right, hmm, this part is gonna not be great fun, lads."

Butt in hand, Kordath turned to find the officer watching him with a look of perplexion. "What?"

"Sorry, not used to watching your kind work, that's all, Sir."

Strong's firm grip on the Ryn's shoulder stopped him before the incident could really occur. Kordath felt his teeth grind as Sprout jumped in front of him, arms waving, "I think he means Force user, Kord! Not, ya know, uhh..."

"Sleemo," he growled. "Listen, DIA spook number two, NO, don't interrupt me, I don't care what your name is at this point. You didn't feel like introducin' yerself when I got here, ya don't get to argue about what I call ya. Me, Big Blue and Little Green here," he stated, glaring at the man and waving at his Fades, "are gonna go track down yer bombers. Take it ya got men checkin' whatever other warehouses and such is about? Don't want nobody else gettin' exploded by these loons."

"All essential personnel have been evacuated while we search, yes, of course. At least no one important was hurt in this explosion." The officer shrugged with nonchalance. He also blinked, and found the Ryn standing in front of him once more, a fire in his eyes, a perplexed Strong a few feet behind him.

**"How did he.."**

"Nobody important, mate? Just a few workin' stiffes who got killed doin' their bloody jobs, aye. Which is why I'm off ta find who done this, so no more of them get offed. You'll not be callin' the dead worthless, number two, ya hear?"

"Sir I-" the agent stopped in mid statement as he felt a pressure from below, glancing down to see the curved edge of one of Bleu's daggers pressed along the bottom of his groin. He licked his lips, suddenly dry, "Sir, I meant, ah, no, uhh, offense..."

"Ya best not," snarled Kordath, pulling his blade away. "Self entitled Human arseheads. Comeon, lads, we got some mad bloody bombers to track."

Sprout hefted his bag up onto his shoulder, waddling awkwardly after the two others. "How?"

"How what?"

"How are we going to find them?"

Kord gave the little green man a grimace, "Well ya see, I got this cigarillo butt, right?"

"Yeah."

"So ya see, I can, like, use the Force ta form a link with the bloke who left it. Or girl, could be a bloody woman bomber, wouldn't surprise me, my luck. Best not be more Zeltrons, go me whole life without meetin' another karkin' Zeltron."

**"How is Misstress Aryelline doing since her promotion, Sir?"**

"You know damn well she don't count, Strong! Anyways, Little Green--"

"That's not my name!"

"Not now, Sprout, anyways, like I was sayin', I can use the Force to kinda track where the, ah, person, who dropped this wee bit of garbage back ta where they are now. Hopefully. If they're not movin' much."

**"Do you have a firm lead already, Master Bleu? Perhaps we should be moving faster!"**

"Well I gotta focus pretty hard on this, Strong, so it's gonna be a bit o' slow goin' from here on out. Just hope they ain't left the city--what the kark are ya doin'!?" screamed the Ryn as he was lifted off the ground and set on one of the big Fade's shoulders. Eyes wide, the Arconan wrapped his tail around the Chiss man's neck to hold on, wondering how ludicrous this looked to people on the street.

**"If you must focus, allow me to do the running for you! This technique of jogging has been passed down the Garmis line for generations, I will not tire!"**

"Runnin'? What? But if ya go too quick like, Sprout ain't gonna be able ta keep up!" shouted Kordath, trying to convince the big man to end this foolishness before he could get a good trot going.

"Put me down!" shrieked Sprout as he was tucked up under Strong's other arm, the big man already huffing along at a good jog.

**"Which way, Master Bleu?"**

Kordath swallowed back the escape attempt of his caf as the Chiss trotted down the sidewalk, a Falleen tucked under one arm, the Ryn on his shoulder. "L..left up ahead!" he shouted, forcing himself to keep an eye open while he focused on the cigar butt in his hand, watching the shimmer in the air that the Force was showing him. A trail to follow, hopefully not too far.

"Right, down that alley," he screamed, one hand still holding the butt, the other clutching Strong's head. He could still hear Sprout spouting a stream of obscenities from the other side of the massive Fade. "STOP!"

Strong came to an abrupt halt, causing both of his unwilling passengers to lurch and complain even more.

"Put...us...down...Strong."

**"Ah, we're here then? Excellent! What would you have me do, Master Bleu?"**

"They're, urp," Kordath paused as he spoke, turning away from his Fades to toss up before continuing, wiping his mouth on his coat. "Oh Gods; they're in the buildin' on the corner, other end of the alley. Me and Sprout is gonna take tha roof opposite, yeah? You go 'round to the other side and wait for me ta tickle yer brain, then go chargin' in. We need ta take one or two alive, find out if they're just loon's or workin' for somebody. Little Green, ya got what I think ya got in that bag you been haulin'?"

"If you think it's the collapsible rifle Strong found for me, you're right," spoke the Falleen, looking even greener than normal. Kordath could feel the nausea coming off of the midget, and knew the little fella would love to shoot a few people. "So we need to find a ladder? Maybe they have some staaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaairs!"

"...why...why did you toss him up there, Strong?"

**"It seemed to be the most efficient method, up you go, Master Bleu!"**

"Wait, what? Gaaah!"

Kordath tried to tuck and roll as he hit the rooftop, bouncing a few times before coming to a stop.

"Please, please. Get off of me," came the muffled voice of Sprout below him. The Ryn pushed up, rubbing his head and stumbling sideways as the Falleen got to his own feet. "Why did he think that was a good idea?"

"Because he's karkin' mad. Did he break yer gun?"

Sprout looked around where they'd landed, confusion evident, before hitting the rooftop again as a black bag sailed through the air and landed on him. "Thanks...Strong..." he muttered.

"Well here's hopin' we did nae make too much noise. Give the big blue idiot a chance ta get in position, I'll see what I can feel out from over here. Stay low, anybody upstairs is gonna notice us quicklike, we keep movin' 'round."

"Stay low, sure, jackass. Be amazed if they don't know we're here after Strong's delivery method."

Kordath and Sprout moved to the edge of the roof, still nursing bruises from the big Fade's manner of tossing them. Crouching below the low wall that ran around the edge of the building, Kord closed his eyes and drew on the Force. The energy suffused him, burning off some of his fatigue and generally improving his mood.

"Ah, alright," he said, peeking his head over the edge and pushing his Senses out. "I got...one, two, three of 'em on the second floor, 'nother half dozen on the first. Lotta ordnance upstairs. Whole lot, that comes inta play we'll have a bad time, might blow up Strong when he goes runnin' in."

"So we're aiming for the guys downstairs?"

"We're nae lettin' 'em kill Strong, Little Green," said the Ryn with strained patience. An idea crossed the Arconan's mind, a grin breaking the look of concentration he was holding. "Ya got that A280 ready?"

Sprout laid the barrel of his armor piercing rifle on the edge of the roof, placing himself behind the scope. They'd cut the stock down significantly for the small guy to get behind it, but the little Falleen's marksmanship was more than proficient. The weapon being longer than Sprout was tall when full put together made the image laughable, but having a midget that could put holes through a tank was in the Ryn's opinion, pretty bloody handy.

"I'm ready. Don't see anybody through the windows."

"Ya wouldn't, they're hangin' about around a table, middle of the room or so."

"So what, I'm guessing?"

"Not quite," spoke the smug Ryn, waving a hand at the wall across the alleyway. A trio of shimmering red X's appeared on the surface, projected through the Force and Bleu's will. "Think ya can get all three before they move? Not sure I can track and maintain the illusions at the same time."

"This isn't gonna be quiet, you know that, right? When I start shooting, the one's downstairs are gonna know."

"Let Big Blue handle that, Little Green, just be ready to pick off anybody who tries to scurry off. Legshots, eh? Need some prisoners to give over to the DIA."

"Fine," said Sprout, taking a few steadying breaths to get himself into a rhythm. Readying the rifle he gave the Ryn a little nod, "Ready then."

"Grand, let's get this over with and go home. Do the thing, Little Green."

Three shots rang out, the armor piercing laser rounds making loud crack sounds as the rifle fired. Duracrete and brick alike exploded as the wall was pierced, and Kordath felt surprise, fear, and then nothing from the three targets upstairs. Downstairs it was like someone had kicked a hive of insects over. With a light push of the Force, he brushed Strong's mind with a simple sense of 'do it.'

"Good shots, mate, stay up and here and see if anybody comes runnin'."

"Where the hell are you going?" asked the Falleen, watching Kordath swing a leg over the short wall.

"Gonna go back up Strong, there's about a half dozen of 'em after all," he stated, waving as he rolled over the side, landing on the alley with a little cushioning of telekinetic Force usage. Reaching back into his coat, he drew a dagger and rolled his shoulders. Now he just needed a way in.

From above he heard Sprout shout, "Do you really think he needs help? Or that going in there is a good idea?"

Before the Ryn could retort, shouting from inside drew his attention, even through the wall.

**"YOU DARE LAY HANDS ON A SON OF THE GARMIS FAMILY!? I GAVE YOU A CHANCE TO HONORABLY LAY DOWN ARMS, FIENDS, NOW YOU SHALL WITNESS THE COMBAT TECHNIQUES THAT HAVE BEEN PASSED DOWN MY FAMILY LINE FOR GENERATIONS!"**

That was when Kordath got his entrance, as a portion of the wall shattered outwards, a body propelled through it. Bleu heard a little moan from the figure, though he wasn't moving, covered in mortar and dust. Sticking his head through the newly formed hole, he sighed and shook his head. Strong had, almost predictably to those who knew the big Chiss, shed his shirt and jacket to do battle.

Twin vibro-knucklers on the big blue Fade's hands sung out as he blocked blows from improved melee weapons and returned vicious strikes to his victims. Kordath crept in, watching as the muscular Chiss grabbed a particularly slow assailant and spun him in the air, striking one of the other bombers hard enough to put him through one of the inner walls of the building. Another blow sent a target sliding across the the floor to Kordath, who kicked the man in the side of the head when he tried to get up.

Left with the one he was holding, who was crying in Strong's grip, and one other which the Chiss was stalking towards. This one felt a desire to live without major reconstructive surgery, darting out a door and into the streets. A strangled cry was heard, along with the report of an A280 blaster rifle moments after he got out of the building. Strong was smiling, his red eyes aflame as he looked about the room. With an offhand motion he brought the one he was holding up and glared at him.

Kordath let out a gagging sound as a puddle formed under the bomber, who then went limp. Strong grunted in approval and tossed him aside, snapping to attention towards the Ryn.

**"Master Bleu, happy to report that all enemies have been disabused of the notion of running away!"**

"Grand, call the DIA, get 'em down here. They'll want ta interrogate the lot of 'em. And put your bloody shirt on, Strong, dunno why ya

feel the need ta flaunt the muscles liket hat when ya fight." The Ryn looked tired suddenly, his usage of the Force having drained him.

**"The intimidation factor, of course! Also the Garmis family has ever been proud of its noble physique, one should never be ashamed to show off such a work of art!"**

"Great, good, put on a jacket or somethin'. Think I saw a couch over there," muttered the Arconan, moving some of the debris to uncover said piece of furniture. Collapsing into it, moments later he was asleep, confident the Fades could take care of the rest. He deserved a bloody day off from this insanity.