K.T.S.M. 3 reflected the light of the dwarf sun Kr’Tall off of it’s fins briefly

before drifting into the dark side of the planet Karufr. Continuing in a never ending orbit

around the planet, K.T.S.M. 3 was one of many satellites used by Taldryan Intelligence.

As the satellite passed over the second largest continent it fed an encrypted package

through the night sky to the Great Hall below.

Ensign Tortrate sat nodding off at his desk as the encrypted files began to

automatically download to his console. Taldryan Intelligence manpower had been

stretched thin, too thin. Pirate attacks, battling the Corporate Sector and infighting with

the other clans in the past year caused a great many casualties and the T.I.D. More agents

being deployed into the field left double shifts for those at home. A greater shield to

defend from the outside, an even greater opening to attack from the inside.

A quiet ding from the console awoke Tortrate abruptly. He brought up the

encryption file and raised an eyebrow. Reaching over to the com he pressed the center

button.

“Sir, we have an encrypted message, level E.K.1. This must be important,” he

spoke with a note of concern in his voice.

“Have it sent to the Spirae immediately,” the voice on the other end commanded.

Aedile Bobecc Varga and Knight Seyda Norith waited in silence. As they waited,

Seyda fought back the urge to leave and return with a giant trash receptacle. Quaestor

Raistline Majere sat working behind what a appeared to be a desk, though Seyda saw it

has a glorified trash can. Papers and data cards were strewn across the desk’s surface,

along with trash, half eaten plates of food, empty coffee cups and an ash try. There were

smears of ash where a half ass attempt to clean up the mess was obviously forgotten.

“I am truly sorry. Behind as always,” Raistline said, throwing a file down onto the

pile. “Please go on Bob.”

“Sir, a E.K. 1 came in half an hour ago regarding the attack.” Bobecc did not stop

talking but noticed Raistline’s posture straighten. “ Intelligence believes they may have

found something. Three encrypted transmissions were sent from a public terminal within

the Ektrosis Temple over the past two weeks.

“Where were they sent?” Raisltine asked.

“The transmissions were bounced off of several locations,” Bobecc continued,

ignoring the interuption. “Intelligence did not find the final destination, but was able to

follow it to Corinae 2 which is within Sphinxian Satellite Technologies territory.

Slowly, Raistline pushed himself to his feet. He allowed for a moment for those

present to see the pain in his face. He walked to the window, looking down the wall of the

Spirae Taldryea. A slow myst had begun to creep up the walls of the Great Hall. Without

looking at his two commanding officers he spoke.

“So, not only does Taldryan have a traitor, but it is one from Ektrosis. This

information is not to leave this room. This is a family affair. I don’t even want Keirdagh

or Howlader to know until we have this straightened out. Seyda will hold an emergency

House meeting in the Aegis Hall while Bob will quietly “question” our members.”

“What about Kooki and Sena?” Seyda spoke up. “They are both away on Omega’s

task force.”

Raistline turned back thoughtful. “Though Kookimarissia still has an Arconan

stench about her, this doesn’t have the feel of Arconain treachery. Consider them both, but keep up your search.” He reached over and grabbed his robes off of his chair. “I’ll

look into recent rogues and then check on your progress. Remember, trust no one.”

Bobecc rubbed his temples and sighed. This is going nowhere he thought as he

watched Warrior Catmatui walk away. He had quietly interviewed every member that had

been present in the past few weeks. No new information had arisen. Each member

seemed equally baffled and pissed over the raid, and were equally vocal at the meeting.

Well, at least she can keep this going for a while he mused, watching Seyda trying to

quell the angry members. Raist can send the mob home when he gets here.

Stealing himself into the shadows, Bobecc quietly left the hall, walking to help

him think. Intelligence would have scoured all holo tapes available of the Ektrois Temple.

Anyone coming near those terminals during any of the access times would be suspect, but

reports stated the files were either corrupt or missing. Anyone with the right slicing know

how or clearance could access them. Maybe even an older clearance….

“A former summit member,” Bobecc muttered aloud, surprised by how loud his

voice echoed through the halls. He continued his thoughts vocally, as if hearing his voice

would help him think. “They wouldn’t know about the new data storage we’ve installed.

Only current Summit members have access.”

He didn’t notice his pace had quickened to a near jog until he was halfway down

the hallway. Coming to the end of the hall Bobecc punched a button on the panel. The

turbo lift ride was quick and soon the doors opened to Taldryan’s vault. Passing door

after door, each hiding storerooms of Taldryan’s treasures, he moved quickly by. Moving

past the entrance to the Force Nexus and making the last turn he came to a halt.

Always open to her members, Taldryan only had two guards posted in the vault.

Those were to be posted outside the Summit’s storeroom. Both lay on the ground. Pulling

his blaster, Bobecc approached the guards cautiously. They were out cold, but didn’t

seem harmed. Everything seemed wrong.

Strange, a terrorist being careful of those he attacked.

Slowly he raised his hand and keyed in the code to open the door. The door flew

quickly open and he waited outside a moment, waiting for a blaster shot to come from

within. Nothing happened. The saboteur had not bothered turning the lights on and the

room was lit dimly by console screens at the far end. Cautiously he stepped inside. As his

eyes grew accustomed to the darkness he could see a figure waiting for him. Bobecc

raised his weapon towards the figure as the door closed behind him.

“You!” he yelled, fighting the urge to pull his finger on the trigger. “Why? I don’t

understand. Ektrosis has meant everything to you. Taldryan has meant everything to you!”

“A nation’s tragedy is a politician’s spear. Sometimes violence must be used to

unify the masses. Now put that thing away. All the evidence is finally gone.” Raistline

Majere stepped forward and his face was illuminated by a console screen’s light. “Help

your Quaestor to sharpen this spear and drive it into the hearts of Taldryan’s enemies.

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