

A thunderous applause clashed and echoed through the rickety building, shaking its foundations, and buckling Lexiconus' knees. The Quarren wiped the water from his eyes to check his surroundings, there wasn't much to look at. From what he could discern, he was in some sort of lobby, with a rounded desk in the west wing, and metallic frames parallel to each other. The windows were immaterial to their purpose, only piles of sand and rubble on the ground now. The east wing of the lobby was inaccessible, due to the giant wall of rubble, twisted rods and countless cadavers. It only took a whiff and Lexiconus caught the rotten flesh into his gills, but something else followed the fumes. Like the bile from a rotting stomach, came a cloud of unknown stench. A disturbance in the Force rippled through his body like a wave of hot air, it felt aggravated, furious, temperamental. It felt hungry.

*Why do I feel like I'm being watched?*

His stomach turned as Lexiconus scanned the room. Chairs wobbled. The clinking of metal on the floor. Rubble tumbled from their original spot, the intrusion getting closer. The Quarren kept his cool, his sharp eyes looking for its whereabouts, as he hand latched onto a lightsaber. A warning hiss came from behind Lexiconus. Then the feeling of intrusion dawned on him.

*Run Lexic! Don't look back*

He sprinted from his position and down a dark hallway, as sparks flew across from the circuitry. Lexiconus ignited his lightsaber and twisted the blade to his side for his own defense. Darkness was all his eyes gave him, but the Force aided him much more. A turning in the corridor came, and the Quarren rushed around it. He was told of a chair lying sideways across the floor, and attempted a hop. Lexiconus was, unfortunately, no jumper and caught his foot on the metal rail. His face slammed into the rubble, cutting down his cheeks and tentacles. The taste of iron and heat flooded his mouth. The Quarren spat and cursed at himself. But the blood was quickly pushed away, as he was warned of another danger. A very silent, and patient danger.

*Why is it suddenly so quiet?*

Lexiconus forced himself to his feet, his soles in pain for the moment. The Force was commanded to dull the nerves and patch his wounds for him, but in the meantime his threat was looming somewhere. Its life signs like a beacon in the darkness, the beast couldn't be seen in the shadows. The Quarren rose his ignited lightsaber to in front of him. Lighting down the corridor in red, instead of behind him.

**HISS**

The black beast stood exactly there, its claws extended to reach and dig into the Quarren's shoulders. He was grabbed and yanked into its hold, while the battleskin of his armour saved him. The hissing rose loudly. It became persistent, authoritative and more than a warning. Lexiconus waved and stabbed his lightsaber around the beast. He cut off appendage after limb, after chitin mail, but the beast only dug its claws further in. His hand guided the

lightsaber to the beast's head and sliced the dome clean off. Lexiconus extended his hand and blasted the body away with the Force, watching it bounce from wall to wall.

"You ugly mother..."

He collapsed to the floor to catch his breath, and to retrieve his spirit from such a deadly encounter. His ears can still remember the sound of its screeching in pain. Just like the manual says, he took a deep inhalation through his gills. He coughed out violently, baulking towards the ground.

*There's that bile stench again...*

The ambient sound of sizzling came from the floor in front of him, as the stench grew worse. Retrieving his lightsaber, Lexiconus ignited it once more and saw the floor itself begin to deteriorate and form a crater. Bubbles formed at the edges, while a milky opaque liquid devoured the duracrete. Inch by inch, the floor surrendered. It appeared that acidic blood was a key component to this beast.

*Such a marvel to witness. Maybe I should take this back and...*

The Force interrupted his thoughts, commanding his head to look up as the roars of countless hisses thundered through the hallway. Just above him where the ceiling was scattered with more holes, the familiar sound of claws on the floor rose to their crescendo. Chairs, frames and doors were thrown and shoved aside, as the horde of the darkness grew closer. Lexiconus slowly sat back against the chair and chuckled to himself.

"Sorry beast, this kill is mine."

The Quaestor inhaled deeply, resisting the bile stench around him and closed his eyes. In one, clean cut, Lexiconus brought the lightsaber through his neck. The Quarren was instantly sent to the void after life.