**Canka’s Cakes**

**Dragostae, Karufr**

Canka Retsil wiped sweat from her brow. As often happened in the Zeltron dominated city of Dragostae, her services were required on a large enough order of cakes to force the young woman to bake overnight. Having only recently got married, Canka wished that she could spend more time with her new spouse, but the demands of running her own business had to come first.

Suddenly, the kitchen was plunged into darkness.

“Now what? Frijia! Is this one of your pranks? You know how important these orders are!” the woman cried out.

Feeling around in the darkness, Canka managed to move through to the shop floor area. That too was pitch black. She noticed that the rest of the street had also appeared to lose power.

*Wow. If this is one of Frijia’s jokes, she’s outdone herself this time. Zeltron humour never ceases to amaze me,* the female thought.

Canka grabbed her datapad. She always left it in the front of her shop to prevent herself from being distracted, but right now it was the only source of light available. On tapping its screen, the baker noticed that she had several urgent messages, both from Frijia and several of her friends.

As she read the messages, Canka began to realise what was happening. The first few messages spoke of an unusually large ship approaching the planet. One message, from an older friend, even stated the ship appeared to look like an old Imperial design.

Dragostae was eerily quiet, Retsil realised. Usually she would be able to hear party music from one of the many nearby nightclubs. She was beginning to wonder if the mysterious ship had somehow completely disabled the city’s power.

Continuing to read through her messages, the baker was distracted by what sounded like a large crowd, screaming loudly as they ran away from something. The last message from Frijia came up on the datapad.

*Canka,*

*The planet is under attack! Just remember that I will always love you!*

*F xxx*

The screaming crowd rushed along the street. Canka had never seen anything quite like it; Zeltron were usually far too busy partying to be afraid of anything.

Moments later, streaks of plasma shot through the air, cutting many of the fleeing crowd down without mercy. The stampede thinned out, giving way to a large group of armour clad soldiers, all carrying large blaster rifles. Canka dived behind the counter, hoping that she hadn’t drawn any attention to herself.

As she hid, the female tried to piece together the events. Karufr was supposed to be an unheard of backwater, many light years from anything of importance. Aside from the occasional strange character that visited her shop, Retsil couldn’t even think of anything exciting happening. For her and Frijia, Dragostae was *normal*.

A loud explosion shook the shop’s foundations. Standing up to examine the area, Canka noticed her windows were completely destroyed. The rest of the street appeared to have fared far worse; what was once a row of bakeries, cantinas and other eateries was now little more than a series of craters and smoking ruins.

“Sir! There’s one!” a male voice cried out.

“Shoot her!” a second, almost identical voice ordered.

Three of the armoured soldiers turned their blasters on Canka. Without even a moment’s hesitation, they fired.

*I love you, Frijia*.

Canka Retsil slumped to the ground, her torso almost catching fire as three blaster bolts converged on the front of her chest.

Karufr had fallen.