Prompt A

Taranae sat drinking her cocktail, a feat she normally couldn’t manage given her daily routine. All seemed well and things were quiet in Aliso. This quiet time was just what she needed to relax and unwind. Her fits of outrage and temper were becoming more the norm for her, and letting her hair down seemed to help her rein in the feelings she so carefully tried to keep under control. Many times her temper had almost lost her friends and comrades and now she had to let off steam now and then to avoid killing or maiming someone she cared about in blind hatred.

As she picked up her drink, the ground trembled. The liquid in her glass rippled as she raised it to her lips and a loud explosion followed; enough to bring parts of the roof crashing down around the assembled drinkers in large chunks. She quickly sprang to her feet and headed for the door; whatever caused the explosion was too close for comfort and it did not bode well. As she exited, the streets were packed with panicking workers, slaves and Brotherhood members. Shielding her eyes against the bright glare of the sun and the billowing clouds of dust that had sprung up as if from nowhere, she squinted around, trying to locate the source of the explosion. The ground trembled again and she realised that whatever it was had its centre underground. She knew that recently, troops had been despatched to explore the caves and surrounding areas around Aliso City, and she realised with horror that they must have disturbed something long hidden away.

A group of sith came racing in from the outskirts of the city, other non-force users with them. As they ran, the ones capable of wielding a lightsaber constantly battled to deflect blaster bolts and the others fired rounds of ammunition into the dust clouds behind them. The Battlemaster drew her saberstaff and ignited it, the blades glowing red in the dust as she swung in a slow arc and waited. After what seemed like an eternity, shapes formed in the cloud, moving forwards with red blaster bolts flying in all directions, gunning down the fighting and innocent populace alike. Taranae waded in with her saber flashing as she met her foes head-on. She gasped in disbelief as she finally sighted the enemy. B1 battle droids on Aliso? How was that possible? She surmised that they must have been buried, waiting underground for some reason but her thinking was cut short as she decapitated another droid before leaping atop the head of one and dropping down to the one behind it, her blade slicing down in an arc and cutting it in two. The opposite sides of the droid fell away in two directions as another wave of droids showed themselves. The Sith wondered how many of the droids had been waiting below Aliso for this particular moment and she realised that the people left standing were hardly any match for the number of droids now marching into the city.

“Where is the Circle?” she screamed above the noise. “Everyone should be out here defending against the attack! All available should be out here now!”

Azmodius ran up to her, slightly panting. “We were training, they are on their way!”

Taranae nodded, her eyes set on her enemy as they charged her position. Her staff swung and sliced until her arms thought they would detach, but she kept on fighting. As her reserves faltered, she gave one last push with her hand outstretched and dozens of the droids flew backwards into each other, some exploding on impact.

Suddenly she was flanked by a number of saber-wielding Sith and she knew that The Circle had finally arrived. As they cut their way into the mass of droids, she heard running feet behind and she turned to see the rest of Plagueis rushing to her aid. She looked again at the constant stream of droids and wondered, just how many were there and could they hold out? Screaming she raced into the mass and leapt into the air, smashing her fist into the ground as she landed. Droids scattered in a circle around her as debris, droid parts and dust flew into the air and she stood, looking at the devastation she had caused. She began to spin her fingers in a swirling motion and the debris around her lifted from the ground, spinning around her body. Pointing, she directed the deadly tornado of shrapnel at the remnants of the attacking force and as it hit them, the shards of debris became miniature missiles as they barrelled into the droids. The enemy was literally torn to pieces as the deadly shrapnel cloud engulfed them and before long, the cloud died down.

Taranae stood before what was left of the encroaching army. All that she saw was a swathe of destruction that followed the path of her tornado attack. As she smiled there was another explosion and her face faltered. She hoped this didn’t presage another attack, as if it did, they were not ready.