**The Return of Big Daddy’s**

**By Dante #2407**

***Deep Space
Tipoca II Med Station***

Dante yawned as he took a sip of his morning caf. The clan leaders were taking turns commanding the medical station while the other commanders led the exploration missions in search of a new home for Scholae. Nearing the end of his week on duty, Kell had already readied his ship to head out on his next mission, and he was just awaiting the return of Lexiconus to take over for him.

The Questor of Imperium’s shuttle landed, and Dante walked out to greet him in the hangar bay. “Glad you’re here…. Time for me to get off this bucket and get on some ground for once,” said Kell with a chuckle.

Lex replied with “I can understand your displeasure of having to be out here for so long. Hope that you enjoy your recon mission. Mine was fairly…. Boring.”

The former Quaestor nodded and said “Thanks… have fun on the station. The food is pretty good.” With a quick wave, Dante headed for his Decimator that was already prepped and ready for launch. His crew was already positioned for launch, and Kell said “Let’s get out of here.

Major Guili responded with “Roger that, sir….”

The Decimator released the docking clamps and headed off away from the station.

“Let’s check out our new home” said Ferraro as the viewscreen was filled with streaking stars with the activation of the hyperdrive.

***Caperion System
Ragnath
Caelestis City***

A few hours later, Dante walked down the street looking around at all of the happenings in the city. After spending most of the last few months in space, the trooper was ready to keep his feet on the ground for awhile. Walking with him was his bodyguard, Buk Rojers, and his new pilot, Anzle Gili. Both had been with him and Ferraro for a couple of weeks so he thought this might be a good bonding experience to do a surveillance mission together. Ferraro volunteered to stay back with the Decimator at the spaceport while the rest of the crew took a quick look around the city.

Anzle was a major in the Starfighter Corps of the Naval Corps so she wasn't under Dante technically in the chain of command. A human female, she had joined the forces of Scholae Palatine a few years before and had been working as a planner for the military command when she had been transferred to Dante as his pilot right after the destruction of the Cocytus system. She was excited about getting back into space and out of the office environment. Working with the leader of the clan's ground forces was something different, and this could be the assignment that would get her promotion to Lt. Colonel.

Buk, on the other hand, wasn't exactly the most willing participant. He had known both Kell and Angelo Dante for years as his parents had been members of the Nightstalkers in the Hammer's Fist and then as a mercenary company for the forces of Scholae Palatine. The newly minted equite had just been given his own special operations platoon in the Imperial Scholae Guard when the Apocalypse of the Cocytus system happened, and now he was stuck babysitting his commanding officer instead of having fun assassinating all of the enemies of the clan.

Looking over at the pair, Dante couldn’t help but chuckle a bit as the trio walked around eyeing up the different objectives throughout the city.

After going though enough dark alleys and side streets to bore him to tears, Buk looked over at Kell and said “So what is our overall objective here?”

“Well, I’m here to do some recon on the local businesses, and then we’re going to plant a few charges around town and have a bit of fun,” replied Dante with a smile.

The answer made Anzle almost giggle to herself as she kept an eye out for anyone tailing them or taking an overly keen interest in the group.

“Really? We’re here to do an economic survey of the city?” grumbled the bodyguard as they dropped off yet another charge in a darkened alleyway.

“Yep…. That is pretty much what we’re here to do. Look over the local economy and destroy some of it,” quipped Dante as he placed the small box near the back wall of some business.

Disgusted at the use of his talents, Buk said “I’ll take point... how many more of those things are we here to drop off?”

“All finished…. Ready to head back to the ship, Major?” said Kell as he smiled at the young officer. “We could stop and get some lunch on the far end of town first, but I’d rather set off all of these charges and get the hades out of here before security tightens up.”

The pilot nodded and said “It’ll be a lot easier to get clearance to take off before…”

With that the trio headed back to the ship through the crowds of the city fairly silently as Anzle was soaking in the atmosphere while Buk was stewing about how he wanted to be dressed in armor carrying out black ops.

As they reached the Decimator and walked up the ramp into the ship, Anzle looked over at Kell and said “What kind of businesses are we blowing up?”

Kell smiled and said “Let’s get out of here first before we jinx it.”

The trio got to the bridge in a hurry, and they hopped in their presumptive positions. The suburban starport was a much better place to leave from as they got the okay from central control, and the Decimator began its ascent.

“Now…. Hit the explosives, Ferraro…” said Dante as they flew over the city.

Ferraro leaned over and hit a switch on the communications console. “Message sent….”

The pilot looked back with a confused look and said “Message?”

“Well, I didn’t want to kill the population since that might accidentally wipe out a lot of good paying future customers,” said Kell with a sly grin on his face. He looked at the city below them and said “I gave them two minutes to evacuate before we blow the explosives.” Looking at the chrono on the bulkhead, Dante said “That would be about…. Now!”

Explosions appeared beneath them along the route that the trio had walked. The charges had been shaped to funnel the explosion inwards so that only the structures that they were aimed at had taken the blunt force of the explosions instead of any poor souls who had been walking by.

“Great job, guys…. We have now set ourselves up for when we take over the system,” said Dante as he looked over at Ferraro.

Buck came back with “What do you mean?”

“Those charges pretty much took out all of the competition for Big Daddy’s when we move in over the next few months,” replied Ferraro. “Petitor Umbrarum will soon be the biggest corporation for gentlemen’s clubs in the system.”

“We also have some good recon on the two or three things that we actually needed to see like the defenses, population count, and the internal security procedures, but there is always a secondary objective. We accomplished both…” added Kell as he lounged back in his command chair sipping some caf. “Major… get us out of orbit and back to the station.”

“But?” was all the pilot could bring herself to say as she went about following the orders from the Field Marshal.

Buk just shook his head and supplied the jump coordinates to Anzle. The stars shone bright then elongated as the ship entered hyperspace.

The two older men began to laugh while the bodyguard and the pilot were dumbfounded that they had just blown up a dozen gentlemen’s clubs and bars around what would soon be their new home.