

A Cold Lightsaber

By Qor Palpatine / #13880

The blinds were drawn shut and the room fell into a dim light, while only the glistening of several objects stood out. Slowly but calmly, the Quarren walked to a bucket chair and sat himself with a slump into it. A glass of his favourite rum sat in his hand, while a lone table was set directly in front of him. He pulled the glass to his dry lips and took a gentle sip, then sighed heavily.

His thoughts turned to the object on the table, a silver cylinder that shimmered in the thin lines of light. The unusual item with man-made parts was unique to the room, a shrine of some sort to the Quarren. He closed his eyes and gave another sigh, as the heat of the rum flowed down his throat. As his thoughts turned back to the object, he was reminded of its owner and the person it represented to him. A man capable of strong emotion, flawless leadership and a constant guidance for Qor. But then the sting of pain and regret entered his thoughts. Like a wave of boiling water, the searing pain from the memory forced Qor to stand and walk away from the weapon.

The doors to his dorm whooshed open as the Quarren stepped out for some air, and walked down the medical station's corridor, rum in his gentle hand. Qor placed a hand over his eye and right side of his forehead, trying to control the swirl of chaotic memories, but all he heard was the rain of ship cannons and cries. With his busy and strained mind on other things, his head bumped into the cold metal of *Black Soul*, who just stood there and watched with curiosity

"So now I am an automated Qor-stopper, huh? Only needed when you want to stop walking? Maybe you need to step down from this important role and let the synthetics take charge." The droid said with a hint of sarcasm. But the statement didn't phase the Quarren, who just continued down the corridor. With his mind on this object, he didn't seem to want or crave the droid superiority from *Black Soul* at this moment. Unsure of what to make of this dull Quarren, the HK-series droid reluctantly followed him.

"Didn't you hear me?" He spoke again, as if trying for a response. "I am not a Qor-stopper, get it? Did you get the humourous joke?" He raised his robotic voice, but it didn't phase Qor who sipped his rum and turned to the cantina wing. Poking his head around the corner, *Black Soul* watched his owner patiently, his Reynolds slugthrower in his hand as if waiting for resistance. Or maybe a good enough shot. But the droid had multiple times to kill off his owner, and yet the Quarren simply didn't care today. Or didn't show it, at least.

Qor sat at the bar and poured some of the cheap rum into his half-empty glass, while the ice finally melted and swirled around. As *Black Soul* calculated confusion, he approached the Quarren and holstered the slugthrower.

"So," *Soul* sighed. "I have heard that mixing other ethanol-based beverages increases the possibility of vomiting in meat bags to 84%, are you testing this hypothesis?"

"Nope. But sometimes, the worst happens." Qor replied, his tone was quite casual and slightly cheerier. This made *Black Soul* calculate some worry, and he was about to speak. But Qor interjected.

"Could you go to my dorm and get the object on the table for me, please?" He asked his droid, who was about to overtly refuse. However, he felt the charm of resisting his master had been lost, mainly because of his current mood.

"Yes I can, but why?" *Soul* asked, while Qor stood and gave *Black Soul* the rum.

"It is a gift, for an old friend. Ready the ship, we're leaving." The Emperor replied, as he turned the corner and disappeared. *Soul* just stood in silence and confused, while holding the rum.

Several minutes later....

The soft hum and wub of the *Black Star's* engines echoed through the hangar of the *Tipoca II* while *Soul* began to work on the pre-flight checks. He had been doing these checks without delay and repeated them once every five minutes. Bored and passing the time, *Soul* checked out his window for the Quarren but found only the hangar staff. Lifting cargo and running around, there was no sign of the Emperor.

"This is Tipoca control to *Black Star*, you have reached your waiting limit for take off and will need to re-apply. Please be advised that as you sit, you are still burning fuel." A voice from the holo-communications rang out to the droid.

"*Black Star* to Tipoca control, don't you think I understood this? I am waiting for the Emperor to arrive so we can continue with our mission. You should spend your precious waiting time looking for him, than disturbing me!" *Black Soul* shouted, then terminated the call. He sighed and started to read a datapad on the Force, as he still tried to grasp the theory behind it. Then the doors whooshed open.

Black Soul turned his head to see Qor Palpatine dressed and geared for combat, in his special forces armour and wearing a utility vest with pockets and knives. The Quarren slipped the helmet on, then tucked his tentacles inside and sat in the co-pilot seat.

"You took your time, did you forget we had a mission to perform? And what is our destination anyway!" The HK-series shouted, as he set off from the station and into the wild space. Qor gave him the datapad with the hyperspace coordinates and started to strap himself in.

"Sorry, I forgot something I was supposed to bring. I rarely wear this armour anymore, since there's hardly been any land battles." He replied as he brought out the old lightsaber from his room. He placed the weapon inside the pilot's compartment and sat back in his chair.

“That weapon isn’t yours. It is much smaller and thicker than the saberstaff you carry around.” The droid noted, while the space before them exploded into streams of white and blue. Qor slowly nodded and sighed.

“You’re right. It’s not. But now it is going home.” The Quarren replied through his helmet, as he brought his own weapon out and held it tightly. The strain on his gloves showed *Black Soul* that he was showing either stress or fear. But it wasn’t just that. Qor also felt something darker; failure.

The ship dropped from hyperspace and into a field of rock and boiling debris from a ruined planet, with the fiery core exposed to the galaxy as probes and small satellites still orbited the destruction.

“Multiple signals have spotted us and are now warning their authority, sir. What is our plan?” The droid asked as they flew further in.

“Land on the planet in those coordinates, Soul. We need to do this, and do it right.” Qor took the weapon from the compartment then stood and left for the ship exit in the cargo area. As the ship entered what was left of the planet’s atmosphere, then soared across the broken continents, Qor breathed in heavily as he sighted.

A mass graveyard, burying thousands of lost souls, damned soldiers and innocent bystanders. The fields of lava and smoke still burned like the day Qor last saw them, and they burned in his heart too. He didn’t show it of course, but this was still a message that stung.

The ship slowed down and came to a raised archipelago, which housed a man-made shrine of sorts. While it was crumbled and burned across the edges, the white marble with the symbols of the old Clan were still visible. Qor activated the breathing system in his helmet and stepped onto the forming ramp, while *Black Soul* turned the ship to face the shrine. His visor detected high levels of micro-wave radiation, but it was something his suit was prepared to battle, while he slowly stepped across the ramp with both lightsabers ready.

“Qor! Our sensors are picking up multiple transport ships dropping into the area! They’re brotherhood marked, possibly inquisitors! We should flee, we don’t have the firepower.” He ran across the ramp and towards the Quarren. But Qor remained calm and ignored the warnings, as his boots felt the crumbling of ash and cinders beneath them, while he marched towards the shrine.

Ships landed and opened their doors while stormtroopers descended onto the area and started laying down some long-range firepower. But *Black Soul* was already entrenched and defending his owner with precision and timed skill. Slugthrower shots melted the faces from the soldiers, while blaster bolts zipped past the Quarren and his back up, as the engineers from the Decimator decided to target the ship’s guns at the resistance.

Qor stared down at the old and rusted lightsaber, then holstered his own weapon back to his belt. He carefully took the helmet off as the Force naturally controlled his intake of oxygen. He gave off a heavy sigh, fearful of looking at the shrine, while his feet edged closer to the charred white marble. It was ruined, with cracks forming and flames still licking the far corners. Yet the symbol of the sun, two dragons and sword were still as visible as they always were. It was loyal to its last days, like the man buried here. The Quarren carefully extended his arm, as blaster fire glanced and sped past his body, his limb shaking heavily. While Qor bit his lip, he placed the lightsaber onto the table and gave a sharp salute.

"I am sorry. I really am." Qor whispered, the only words he spoke at this pilgrimage. He closed his eyes and bit his lip again, fighting back the tears, never daring to show weakness to the man he respected more than most.

"Qor! We have to leave! The *Unforgiven* is here! We will be turned to dust if we don't!" The pilot Lieutenant roared, as he raced towards the Imperator, shooting the soldiers effortlessly, while he scooped the Quarren's helmet up. Qor was then grabbed by the droid then lifted and carried onto the ship, without putting up a struggle.

The Quarren was launched into the ship as the door slammed shut, then the vehicle raised and sped from its mark. The soldiers were left in a wave of fire and ash, while slowly approaching the shrine in wonder. A lone sergeant leaned over and picked up the lightsaber, investigating the marks as he received a hologram from a shadow figure.

"Report, sergeant Batista." The cloaked man ordered.

"More Palatinaeans sir, they seemed to be visiting a grave of some sort, and they offered tribute of a broken lightsaber." He replied, flicking the activation switch and only seeing small, red sparks.

"Can you make out the designation of the grave, sergeant? It will be important to the Iron Throne." He replied as anger lingered on his every word. The trooper wiped his glove over the lid and revealed the name for the body.

"Yes sir. It is a, uh, a *Deelak Krenul* or *Delak Krennel* sir. Not sure, some letters are missing from the fire."

"Noted, sergeant. Report back to the *Unforgiven* for debriefing. We'll finish those Palatinaeans soon. They will join mister Krennel momentarily."

The End