

## Scouting Report

### Yridia IX

### Yridia System

A sith knight's errands were often arduous in times of war. Erik Cato had risked his life several times in service to Clan Naga Sadow but his newest task proved to be a truly formidable challenge. On the jungle planet of Aeotheran he was given an address to retrieve a package. That was the easy part. The black box's contents were now scattered in front of him on the cool metal flooring aboard his HH-87 starhopper. He examined each item in careful detail on his transit to the Yridia System, playing the voice message included over and over again in his thoughts. Although the recording never identifies itself he could not mistake the voice of his master Lilith Versea-Stormwind.

*This next task will require utmost secrecy and is completely off the books. It will take subtlety, focus and complete discretion. Let me make this perfectly clear, there is to be minimal violence and no opportunities to trace your actions back to the clan. Pull out of the mission as soon there is any hint of compromisation. If you can't pull out you must end your life before they can capture you. Destroy this message after committing it to memory.*

*You are to take the place of a high ranking Dlarit Corporation executive on his way to Yridia IX as part of ongoing trade missions with Clan Tarentum. You will meet with officials, tour facilities and bring back intel of economic and military strength. Included in your package are forged credentials, a stipend of credits, security spikes and a computer probe. Smuggle the devices into one of their facilities and follow the instructions left on your personal datapad. The probe will seek out trade information and the spikes will bypass any security blocks you may encounter. Get as much intel you can and then depart for the Sepros system. Our contacts will meet you in transit once you're back in sector space. Good luck and don't mess this up. We cannot afford a breach our neutralities at such a critical time.*

Preparing was difficult. Erik had never experienced anything close to the life of a corporate executive and now he had to fool others into believing it came naturally to him. He had more than a few words to pass along to his master should he survive the encounter. It took half a day of searching through various Aeotheran markets to find clothing and items suited to those in high standing. He temporarily replaced his speeder and astromech with a state of the art BD-3000 luxury droid on collateral loan. The droid's metal chassis was a dazzling gold and silver which held some useful surprises of its own. A hidden, shielded compartment had been installed with just enough room to hold his lightsaber, an encrypted academy datapad and computer devices.

Now, on the day of his arrival, Erik took a last look at all the slicing equipment and their accompanying instructions before placing them within the deactivated luxury droid. It stood nearby in the cockpit, remaining passive as he closed the hidden compartments. Even the droid would have no memory of its contents as a necessary precaution. He destroyed the

instructional message from his master and quickly dressed in formal attire suitable to a Dlarit executive. A small beeping noise emitted from one of the cockpit's controls, alerting him to another ship's presence.

Two arc-170 starfighters were hailing his ship. He had finally dropped out of hyperspace.

"You have entered Yridian space. Identify yourself." Flipping a few switches, he relayed his information and activated the comms.

"This is Salizar Brennan of the Dlarit Corporation. I have orders to rendezvous at Yridia IX immediately." He said with an arrogant tone. There was a brief pause. Erik held his breath until he heard a response.

"You have been cleared for landing. We will escort you to your designated landing zone. Do not deviate." He could hear the connection being cut and the two fighters slowed their speed and turned about, following his vessel from behind. Confirming the coordinates, the warrior had taken his first steps to becoming a spy.

It wasn't long before he was docked and brought along on a private tour of one of many trade headquarters buildings. The luxury droid accompanied him, carrying his dummy datapad while the restricted technologies remained buried within her form. There was a dull speech about the continued friendship of their combined systems and the vital necessity for raw materials. The sith played the part of an executive well. Cocky, confident and quick to point out flaws to draw away attention from himself.

As the tour was approaching what he thought to be its end he paused and turned to his guide, a human by the name of Zanthor. It didn't take much effort for him to apply the force and manipulate the poor man's mind with an accompanying gesture of his hand.

"You have an urgent matter to attend to outside. Exit the building and return in fifteen minutes. I will meet you in the main board room."

"I'm really sorry, Mr. Brennan but I just remembered an urgent matter. I'll leave you in the main board room until my return."

With that, Erik found himself alone. Scanning the board room's large table he found an access panel and a few ports. He switched off the droid and scrambled to remove all the items from the hidden compartment. His heart was racing. He nervously attached the computer probe and two security spikes into the available ports. He hoped he remembered the sequence of events correctly. There was no time for error. The last item to be connected was his encrypted academy datapad. The screen flashed and a large chain of information started scrolling downwards. Although he didn't understand what was being downloaded it looked to be transferring properly. He couldn't help but grin.

The data dump was massive and incomplete but Erik sensed the presence of Zanthor returning. He yanked his equipment free from the panel and stuffed everything back into the droid. After a quick tap to ensure the hidden hatch was secure, he reactivate the droid and fell into a comfortable chair.

As Zanthor returned Erik gave a dramatic sigh and stood to his feet. "You have kept me waiting long enough, sir. I have no more time to spare. I will pass on what you've said to my betters and someone will be contacting you in a few days with our response. You may escort me out now."

His guide paused and opened his mouth yet no words came out. He nodded and gestured back the way they came, "If you insist, Mr. Brennan. Please follow me."

On the way out security had taken his items and scanned over his dummy datapad. They found nothing that would compromise him and Erik was cleared to leave. It wasn't long before he was racing back to his ship and preparing for launch.

On the journey back Erik had given more thought as to why he had been chosen for such a mission. Looking over the stolen, encrypted data proved to be impossible despite several attempts. He had no concept of how to unlock its contents. Furthermore, he was not even sure he would understand it all even if it was laid out before him in plain old basic. It was this thought that gave the warrior an epiphany of sorts. The perfect spy was plausibly deniable, expendable and cheap. They had given him the bare minimum to complete his task and he had succeeded on what he could only imagine was luck and intuition. Had he been captured he knew nothing of use to Clan Tarentum. If he had perished the clan would remain safe. The rewards outweighed such minimal risks in their eyes. These thoughts infected his mind, breeding anger and paranoia from the moment he left and stayed with him long after his return to Sepros space.