

Emerald Forest

Fiction

For It Came in the Night

By

Takagari "DarkHawk" KogaRyu

Kashyyk

VT-49 "Tãrõn" Decimator

Tytus kept the Decimator steady as the ship raced narrowly over the dense forrest of the Planet. A few branches scrapped across the bottom of the fuselage. DarkHawk, seating in the copilot's seat glared at his friend. "You know, when I pulled you from that pirate wreckage, you said you were an ace pilot. I should have taken into account the condition of the POS ship you were in."

"It got me out that situation did it not?" Tytus said facetiously.

"Ass..." DarkHawk said.

"Besides DH, I am not the one who said stay under the radar on this run. I thought the Brotherhood had a good relationship here?" Ty asked

DarkHawk ponder that last bit for a minute before he answered. "We do, though the evidence leads to an inside job, plausible deniability is key to our success. The less the locals know, the better."

"True, true.." replied Ty.

The mission plan was simple, find out who is hijacking thousands of barrels of oil from the refinery near the city of Kachirho. DarkHawk wanted to recon the refinery first before him and Tytus started investigating shipping lanes in and out of the refinery.

The Decimator was making its way steadily towards the refinery. Choosing a stealthier approach, the covert ship was maing its way towards the back northwest corner of the target. The ship was closing in at about eighteen klicks away when all hell broke loose. Audible alarms began to scream throughout the ship. The NAV computer flashed several times blanking out then returning with scrambled images across the screens.

"Um...what the hell...." Ty said, frustrated.

The Duros calmly began depressing a sequence of buttons trying to regain the ship back to normal operating parameters.

"What's going on Ty?" DarkHawk asked.

Ty looked over at his friend and colleague, "We have lost control of the ship..." he said with an astonished look over him.

"Impossible!" DarkHawk exclaimed.

Ty threw his hands in the air, "Look boss, no hands!" he said sarcastically

DarkHawk shot a look of discontent at his pilot. Just then a message blasted across the main screen of the flight deck. "*Enjoy the ride...*" it flashed across the screen several times before returning to it jumbled jargon of letters and broken images. The ship broke off its flight path and took a hard right heading due north. The ship's interior lights shut down, they were flying in the darkness both inside and out.

"All systems are not responding! Someone hacked our system and has taken control, we are just along for the ride." The Duros said.

"I am looking forward to finding out who did this. Then ensure whoever it is, will have to brush their teeth through their ass..." DarkHawk snarled.

"Before you do that, make sure we get my ship back," Ty said calmly.

"Your ship?" DarkHawk asked facetiously.

"Yeah, I fly you kill, hence, my ship..." Tytus said elegantly.

DarkHawk shook his head and scoffed at the comment. The darkness of night blended in with the darkness of the ship's interior. It was an offputting feeling for both occupants to sit there and watch, "*Enjoy the ride...*" The Decimator pierced through the night towards its new destination. DarkHawk left his seat and made his way back towards the cargo hold. Checking his speeder and getting his tools of the trade ready for a new mission.

Soon the ship's engines throttled back and began to hover over a clearing. The Decimator started its landing descent, hanging about five meters over the planet's surface. In one erratic action, the ship slammed down on its landing gear. Even through the darkness of the night, Ty could see dust and debris through the main viewing screen engulf the Decimator as it slammed to the ground. Both occupants unknowingly to one another screamed out "Jerkoff!" as they felt the impact resonate through their bodies.

DarkHawk depressed the button for the cargo door with no response. He continued to depress the button and no action followed with the Quaestor's commands.

"Ty, doors won't open..."

"And you want me to do what about it?" the Duros replied.

Within a few moments, the doors began to open. The night air raced in the cargo hold, the smell of rain was fresh. About the only positive aspect thus far. DarkHawk took a deep inhale in allowing the aroma of the night into his lungs. The Dakhonian walked down the ramp cautiously, the feeling that the ship was most certainly being watched rapidly came over him. DarkHawk bent down and grabbed a handful of fresh, moist dirt, smelling the soil, then let it fall through his gloved hand.

"Ty, do we have comm's?" asked DarkHawk

"Not at the moment, I am uploading my own algorithm into the main computer. That should give me access so I can block out our visitor and hopefully track them down," replied Tytus.

"Make it snappy Ty. I am going to scout out the area, I will keep my comm's open when you get them up and running, give me a shout out, would you? If anyone comes near the ship, send up a flare.." DarkHawk said. The Sith pulled his helm over his head. Two bursts of vapor expelled from either side of the mouthpiece. Tapping the bottom of the helmet, DarkHawk chuckled. When he spoke, his voice came in a low, unnatural, rasp. "Don't forget to kill them."

Planet Surface

Kashyyk

DarkHawk hit the dense green forest, not knowing what he was looking for, he kept a keen eye out for...anything *unusual*. Whoever hacked the Tārōn, would need to be somewhere nearby. But that could be in any direction, this poses a most challenging impasse to this mission. DarkHawk was about fifteen yards into the forest when he saw it. A faint red light, blinking rapidly to the Northeast. The light flashed for a few more seconds, pausing then restarting its sequence. "*Time to get a bird's eye view, can't see jack through this forest...*," DarkHawk said to himself.

DarkHawk scaled an enormous Wroshyr tree, racing up its trunk with little effort. Jumping and swinging from one large tree branch to another, the acrobatic maneuvers for which the Sith ascended the tree was quite impressive. He continued his climb for nearly two hundred meters. The Sith stopped about four meters from the top of the tree. He stood on a large bough, from here, he could see all of his surroundings. DarkHawk centered his breathing, the climb was pretty intense, definitely got the blood pumping through his body. He watched intently to see if the light would expose itself one more time.

Luckily, there it was off to the East. DarkHawk watched as he tried to make any landmarks around the area. Two clearings to the East of the light's location. The light continually blinked, DarkHawk's eyes squinted behind his helm, "*Is that what I think it is...*?" he said to himself. Watching the light more closely now, indeed it was, three quick flashes, three long flashes followed by three more quick ones. "*SOS? Trap or authentic.? Only one way to find out...*" he thought. DarkHawk walked out on the boughs until he could go no further. The boughs gave a little as he traversed closer to its end. Looking out into the darkness, DarkHawk looked down towards the ground. "*This should be high enough, a clear path to the south, have to swing back around once I get airborne,*" he thought.

Without hesitation, DarkHawk stepped off his perch and fell into the darkness. He tucked himself into a ball and then into a front flip positioning himself head first in his descent. A quick press of a button on his gauntlet and the wingpack sprung to life. The two wings extended out and caught the night air. DarkHawk felt the glider pulling on his body and adjust himself to begin to climb in the night sky. His descent was fast and took all of his strength to pull up from the dive. Now, heading into the wind, the Dakhonian was gaining altitude and spotted the two clearings he marked earlier. Maneuvering his body slightly, while simultaneously pulling down on the left wing handgrip, the glider made an arcing turn towards the East.

Now keeping the clearings at his twelve o'clock, they were definitely sufficient enough to make a stealthy landing. "*Can't beat good old fashion glider power, no chance of that being hacked.*" he thought. Within minutes the flying Sith made it to the first clearing and DarkHawk started

pulling down on the wings handgrips and began his descent. Just as his boots began to skim the ground, DarkHawk depressed the button once again and the wings folded up and retracted back into their housing. DarkHawk rolled across the land and came up into a walk.

Looking around the Sith zeroed in on the location of the signal. His helm's onboard CPU pinpointed all the diagnostics and headings. Sticking to the tree line, DarkHawk stealthily maneuvered through the tree line until he was just shy of his target. Not knowing what he will be headed into, another tree climb was in order. Quickly making his way up another large Wroshyr tree, the Sith perched on one of the main boughs of the tree. There he could see another small clearing and a small outpost building. Sticking to the trees, DarkHawk made use of the size of the trees to support his movements. Again jumping and swinging from one tree bough to another. Finally positioning himself towards the left side of the outpost building.

Voices could be heard from the small building. A small smile crested over the face of the Quaestor, action would soon ensue. The door to the building opened and two guards walked out. Both holding blasters, both with Collective badges on their uniforms. "Douchebags," Darkhawk said in a whisper. Immediately he could feel the hate brewing inside him, it fueled his being. Grabbing his Nightsister bow, he clicked the button on the hilt and the folded bow snapped into position. Drawing back on the weapon, the bow produced a plasma arrow as DarkHawk aimed his weapon.

"Nw kash zo tash. Antai kash tik sh. Pro sh nu gauti ty." <Peace is a lie. There is only Passion. Through Passion, I gain Strength.> DarkHawk whispered as he released his arrow. The unexpected man had no clue that his current footsteps would be his last. The plasma arrow pierced the man's skull and slammed him into a tree. His body toppled over lifeless painting the base of the tree with blood and chunks of brain matter. The second guard watched the horror of this in front of him. His fear grew to such a point that he urinated on himself. He swung around with his blaster to attempting to aim at whatever just killed his comrade. Before he could square himself up to the arrow's direction, another plasma arrow pierced the night and landed on its mark. Classic kill shot to the skull, the guard toppled over and slammed to the ground. The victim's body began to twitch from pulsating nerves not wanting to die. No other movements...

DarkHawk watched from his perch, ready. Reaching out to the Force, the Battlelord only felt the presence of one other, still inside the building. An eyebrow raised. Yet nothing. No movement. The heart is pounding steadily, boom...boom...boom. DarkHawk slowly rolled off the bough, slithering down the trunk of the tree and quietly landing on the ground. Using the aid of the Force, DarkHawk launched into a sprint, rapidly putting him at the building's entrance. Stowing the bow away, the Battlelord unhooked his saber, embracing it in his grip. Turning the corner and stalking his way inside. The first room, clear, creeping deadly silent across the floor to the next room. Clear as well, looks to be the Comm room...noted. On to the next. The presence of the other growing, stronger...had to be the next room. DarkHawk smiled behind his helm, dropped his shoulders and rolled out of one room and into another, Coming upright and igniting his saber, the crimson blade illuminated the room blood red.

Just before the blade cut into its prey, DarkHawk stopped short. A woman, bound to a chair and gagged. Her eyes, laced with tears, and bruises across her face. DarkHawk deactivated his saber, placing back on his utility belt. Pulling the gag away from her mouth, "Who the hell are

you lady?" DarkHawk asked. She scowled at him, answering sternly, "My name is Bree Kotal, thank you very much!"

"Umm...ok. Who the hell are you Bree Kotla?"

"I am the Chief of Security for the refinery, these asshats here took me from my post and brought me here!" she said gasping for air.

"Chief of Security...Really?" DarkHawk said blatantly sarcastic.

The woman just stared at the Wraith standing in front of her, "Fine! I am the head auditor, not the chief of security." she said

"Wonderful...Now, what do these guys want with you?"

She peeked around the Sith to see if anyone was coming, "Your friends...they are taking a dirt nap...your welcome. Now what do they want with you!" he said forcefully.

"Well...I do the books, I know what is coming in and coming out, our productions numbers were not lining up with our shipping numbers. Then I...stumbled on these guys and their little operation they have going. These guys are smuggling hundreds of barrels out of here, right under are very noses."

DarkHawk tilted his head to one side as he studied the woman. She seemed almost offended by that gesture. "And these two, only these two brought you here? Where is their crew? Still does not answer my question why you?" said DarkHawk

"I made a mistake and brought it up to my boss. Apparently, he is their mole because the next thing I know I am getting yanked out of my office with a blindfold on and then I am getting the crap kicked out me" she said, choking back her emotions.

"Exactly lady you took the ass beating, I should snap your neck now for lying to me!"

"Please, I spar with girls in martial arts class that hit harder than these clowns. And yes me, I discovered their whole operation, they are piping it away to their own collection facility on the other side of the planet. That is there big base, in the middle of nowhere, then they freight that crap out to the highest bidder. My dumbass boss did not think I would find his little worm in the system. That's why they had me here they called for transport for us there. Then you guys showed up, scrambling your ship's computers, forced you down. They thought you were my crew, don't figure they counted on the likes of you."

"Her story already alignes with mission dossier, and her name was on the list of executives." he thought. "Alright Lady, you may have just made my job a lot easier. How did they hack my ship?" he demanded.

"There, that control station, if you untie me I can hack their hack and disable it."

"Shiza, nenx ny iv zo siurk..." <Not much of a choice...> he said.

"What?" Bree said.

"Nothing lady" replied DarkHawk as he untied her. She stood up and turned towards to workstation, DarkHawk stood directly infront of her. She did not realize how bif the Wraith was, as he was hunced over at him most of their conversation. Without hesitation, she walked

directly over to the work station and started rapidly poking at the keys of the keyboard. Sounded more like a machine gun going off, this chick was nothing but a fury of fingers.

"Done!" Bree exclaimed.

"Hack offline, reverting all systems back to refinery control..."

DarkHawk stared at the woman as she finished her volley of keyboard strokes. He brought his forearm up to his left hand, depress his comm button. "Ty, you copy...Ty?"

Tārōn Landing Site

Kashyyk

Tytus slammed his fist on the console and boom! Lights came on, alarms stopped, and systems were back online. Then Tytus heard the voice over comms. Replying back, "Yeah I got you, GPS be up in a second, and I will be there in a jiffy." the Darus said.

Ty whipped through the start sequence of the Decimator, getting the ship off the ground, spun her around and punched the throttle. GPS and Navigation came online simultaneously, Ty pulled the throttle back a bit and yanked the controls to the left. Hammering the accelerators forward, putting the NAV beacon directly in front of him.

"And Ty, expect company. I will have one in tow..." DarkHawk said

"Great, another stray!" Ty replied.

Outpost Building

Kashyyk

"So tell me, if these guys did the hack to get me here, who put up the SOS?" asked DarkHawk.

"That was easy, that is me, the execs at the refinery all have homing beacons on our wrist comms. I just happened to boost mine with a variable modulator allowing me to hack low key systems nearby. I saw the radio tower when we came in, used its tower lights to flash the signal. These idiots tied my hands behind my back, never saw me doing a thing." Bree said.

"*You have got to be kidding me...*" DarkHawk thought. "I would accuse you of bullshitting me, but this is almost too good to be true. I may have use for you yet!" DarkHawk said.

"Wait a minute what? First these dudes, now you, no thanks I can make it back to the refinery myself." Bree exclaimed

DarkHawk squeezed his thumb and forefinger closer together. The woman felt the effects of the Force immediately. Her throat was being crushed and nothing was touching her. The Battlelord spoke tensely, "Look, lady, I don't have time for games here. For all intensive purposes, we have an army bearing down on us. When they get here, a beating will be the least of your worries. Now, I don't give a rat's ass whether you stay here, or not. One way or another lady,

either you come with me, or tie yourself back to that chair and savor your last moments of life...saavy?"

Bree nodded with what strength she had left. DarkHawk released the woman from his clutches and she gasped for breath. "Bastard!" she screamed.

"And then some lady..." replied DarkHawk.

DarkHawk grabbed her arm and the two quickly exited the building. As soon as they exited the building, blaster fire came raining down on them. DarkHawk pushed the woman forward and went into a roll of his own. He came up with the bow, two quick shots. One hit the shooter in the throat. A cloud of blood sprayed around the man he fell shooting clipping another in the torso. The second plasma arrow shot a hair wide and exploded into a massive tree trunk. Wood splinters soared through the air and clipped the third and forth men. Though the initial shot missed, it caused enough of a diversion that the assailants had no time to react as two more shots from the Nightsister bow pierced their torso's. Blood and visceral painted the area a deadly shade of red.

Just then the Decimator came in with a textbook straffing run. The laser turrents flashed the night as they tore apart the initial Collective crew. Bodies flew from left and right from the laser blast. More pieces of bodily remains scattered across the Forrest floor. DarkHawk grabbed Bree and began to sprint towards the ship. With the last volley from both the Decimator's laser turrents, the two just had to maneuver and jump over shredded and dismembered bodies.

DarkHawk and Bree made it to the ramp of the Tārōn, just as a large troop transport crested the hill. Massive canon fire began to explode around them as they made their way into the ship.

"Punch it, Ty!" DarkHawk exclaimed.

Tytus did precisely what was asked of him as he pushed the throttles forward. The Kuat Drive Yards engines spooled up and the ship raced off, into what remained the night.

"Get us somewhere safe Ty, we need to have a long discussion with this one." DarkHawk said.

"We headed back to the base boss?" Ty asked.

DarkHawk depressed the release buttons on his helm, purging air depleted as he removed it.

"Nope, our mission is not over, but this one has all the answers..." the Battlelord said with a devilish grin.