

It came in the night...

A submission for the competition event

'It came in the night...'

Written by Acolyte Appius Wight of Clan Vizsla.

There's a lot that can go wrong in the wilds of Zsoldos. Depending on where you are you could be in the dense rainforests outside of Saga surrounded by the predators of the jungle and toxic insects. Maybe even the unforgiving frozen tundra on either poles of the planet where you can freeze to death in the ferocious blizzards and unending cold. Or maybe you could be, as is Appius' current situation...

"Come on! Work you worthless piece of scrap!" Shouted Appius, frustration kicking in as he kicked the side of the HH-87 Starhopper he was piloting that was now buried a couple of metres in the sand.

He was in the middle of the desert in the blackness of night. Miles away from Ebon Ridge. Where heats during the daytime reaching scorching heights and there isn't a speck of life for miles. Sand and hard dusty rocks and boulders were his only companions out here.

There was no sound other than the tampering and meddling of the young Jedi attempting to get his ship running again and he honestly couldn't believe his luck. It was supposed to be just a simple delivery mission.

He was to take the designated ship from the Jasper spaceport in Ebon Ridge to Yuanming. The HH-87 Starhopper was personally picked for this mission for its utility and versatility. It wasn't cheap and Appius would have some explaining to do if anything happened to it. It was carrying some small supplies for the local populace on Du Kang island. Nothing special, just some building and construction equipment. Civilization was scarce on the planet so constant projects were always underway to create new towns and cities. Nothing big or heavy or valuable was being transported. It was just a few crates with tools that fit in the back. Enough equipment for a small taskforce.

He was to do it under the cover of darkness so the 'less desirables' of Ebon Ridge didn't spot him until he was on the ship and on his way. Bandits and thieves lurked the area hoping to make quick credits where they could and he would be a prime target if caught. There were contacts from Clan Vizsla in the area who had managed to arrange the transport. All Appius had to do was pilot it there.

If only it was that easy...

The split second Appius was out of the settlement the computer systems went haywire. He lost complete control and the ship seemed to steer him in the opposite direction to where he

both wanted and needed to go and crash landed in the middle of nowhere. The wings didn't even have time to fold in before the landing. Now, Appius liked to think he was somewhat of a decent pilot. Not the best by any means but he knew how to steer, knew some clever manoeuvres and perhaps most importantly how not to crash!

The ship had been tampered with. That much was obvious. The control system had been hacked, there were markings that, whilst faint, were there as signs someone had been having their way with this ship before him and there was nothing he could do to fix it. He was a Jedi, not an engineer. He was cursing the fact he didn't check over it properly before take off.

He had been trying for the last hour to get the ship running with no success. It was still in relatively good shape and from what he could tell it should still run perfectly fine. It was only buried a couple of feet in the sand which was nothing for this kind of ship.

This was really, really bad. It was night time right now so the desert was relatively cool and dark but once dawn broke the desert would reach unsurvivable temperatures without a large supply of water. He may be a Jedi but the Force doesn't make him immortal.

He felt panic begin to set in. He had never been in this kind of situation before. He had used the force to mend injuries, faced numerous thugs and bandits and even been witness to battlefields where blasters roared and sabers swung. But never has he been stranded alone with nothing to help him survive.

He took a few steps away from the Starfighter in a vain attempt to get a bearing on his surroundings. He was expecting to find nothing except the empty, rough terrain of the desert. He continued moved further and further away until he was approximately twenty metres from the ship.

But then...

It came in the night...

Quite literally. There was a glimmer of light in the distance and it seemed to be getting closer. At first it was gradual, but then seemed to approach closer and closer at a faster pace until a faint whirring sound reached Appius' ears.

As it approached him Appius realized what it was. It was a Speeder Bike in the style that the Stormtroopers of the old Galactic Empire used to use. The 74-Z, famed for its speed and mobility in tough terrain. Only this one seemed to have been cleverly modified with a headlight such as to navigate the dark. A cloaked, hooded figure rode it and Appius couldn't make out any distinguishing features due to the lack of visibility in the darkness. Not that it mattered in the current moment. His biggest priority was getting out of this desert.

The Jedi waved his arms frantically, hoping to draw the bike riders attention.

"Wait! Stop!" Cried Appius.

But the rider never slowed down. Instead, as the bike sped past the driver pulled what looked like an orb and dropped it at Appius' feet. Appius looked over it for a moment. It began to glow red and beeped menacingly.

Suddenly his precognition kicked in and reacting purely on instinct he reached out with the force to grab the orb telekinetically and flung it into a random rock nearby. It exploded on impact as shards of the rock as well as sand and dust clouded the area. It was a Thermal Defonator. A deadly weapon and Appius had only just avoided meeting a bloody end.

The cloaked figure however, had now turned around and was heading straight back towards the Jedi. Not wanting to take chances, Appius called upon his power in the Force and a Barrier erupted from him. It was his go to technique in combat to defend himself and he had activated it not a moment too soon, for the cloaked figure had begun to use his Speeder Bike as a weapon. using the two guns mounted on the front to fire at his target. The barrier Appius created absorbed these bolts though with great difficulty. If these were regular blaster bolts they would have been no issue for the young Jedi but these were no ordinary blaster bolts, these were laser cannons that packed more velocity, weight and power behind each shot that forced the Jedi to focus solely on maintaining his barrier against their impact, both hands up pouring whatever power he could into maintaining it. If his concentration wavered for even a moment he was as good as dead. But this was not the only danger the young Jedi had to face. The opposing Speeder was careening towards him at frightening speed. A split second before it hit him he was forced to drop flat onto the coarse sand below to avoid being decapitated by the metal framing. It was moving at 140mph at roughly head height. If that had hit him he would have lost his head.

This person was trying their damndest to kill him and Appius was done playing games. It was time to end this now. He stood back onto his feet. He didn't have the time to use Force Lightning plus it was far too risky. If he mistimed it the speeder could explode in close proximity to him, injuring him in the ensuing explosion. He called upon his power in the Force once again and his barrier once again sprung to life. Then, using his power in Telekinesis he called his lightsaber from his waist to his hand. But he didn't activate it. Not yet. Instead, He closed his eyes, believing the force would tell him what to do. Letting it guide him, control him, be moved by, centred by it and ultimately, let it empower him.

He had a plan. It was risky, he was no master of the technique he was about to use, in fact he only knew it on the most basic level and it required his full concentration. The Cloaked figure on the bike had once spun around and was attempting the same hit and run tactic as before, foregoing the lasers as they hadn't worked against the Jedi prior.

This is what Appius was hoping for.

His eyes snapped open as the vehicle closed in he could sense it! The time was now! The Force had amplified him, making him faster than he had ever been and at the last chance he had before the vehicle ran him down he dodged to the right, narrowly avoiding the incoming

vehicle and ignited his lightsaber. A green blade pierced not only the darkness of the night but also the Speeder Bike as it passed, using his newfound speed he sliced the steel that connected the laser cannons at the front to the driver in the seat, all without so much as touching the driver themselves. Everything happened in a blur. And In the time of a single thought Appius had successfully counter attacked.

Thinking quickly, the cloaked figure dived off the bike in order to save themselves from the impending crash. However, they had horribly mistimed their leap and collided chest first with one of the many boulders dotting the desert landscape. A sickening crack could have been heard for miles if not for the two pieces of the speeder that they had left behind. They spun and crashed into two separate fireballs a few metres further ahead. The cloaked figure collapsed to the sand below and laid there motionless.

Appius remained where he was for a few moments, exhausted and out of breath. He only knew the basics of the Amplification technique and it showed. Just a few moments using the Force to amplify a single physical quality of his was enough to fatigue him. He decided to take a few moments to himself to catch his breath and allow him to take in what had just occurred.

Honestly? He was emotionally torn. He had survived and in that regard he thought he should be pleased with himself. But he hated senseless conflicts. Hated fighting and most of all hated what he had to do in order to survive. He much preferred more diplomat approaches. After all he was a Sorcerer, dedicated to studies of the force and believed that every living being had a purpose. He was a well of mixed emotions right now. Relief and regret being just a couple of those very feelings. After a few moments Appius collected himself both mentally and physically and steeled himself for his approach towards the cloaked figure.

With the Speeder Bike destroyed the only visible light available was the fire in the distance that burned from the wreckage of the destroyed Speeder that only just revealed the silhouette of the cloaked figure as well as the emitting glow from his lightsaber that kept the darkness at bay. He kept both hands on the hilt and the blade of his weapon close to his body. After all, his father had always told him he could never be too careful in situations like this.

It only took a couple of minutes to reach the body laid in the sand but to Appius it felt like a small eternity. Questions raced through his mind, who was this person? Why did they attack him? Did they hack his ship? If so then why? And perhaps most importantly...

Had he just let his emotions get the better of him? Did he literally kill his one chance to get out of this desert?

He stood over the body and expected to find a lifesaver corpse to be claimed by the desert but to his relief whoever this was still alive. Their breathing however, was rough and ragged. It sounded like they were struggling. They were wearing a long black trench coat with a thin hood in order to hide their identity. Appius removed the hood to reveal a young man with blue skin and dark blue hair. It was a member of the Chiss race. He sported red eyes with a

scar penetrating the corner of his left eyelid. He didn't look like a tall man. At Appius' guess he was roughly 5ft9, a good few inches shorter than himself considering he was 6ft4. The Chiss also had a really slim build, almost like a stick if he were to exaggerate.

"A Chiss... all the way out here?" Appius questioned to himself. It was rare to see their species so far out in the edge of space and especially on Zsoldos. Their homeworld, Csilla, was considered a frozen wasteland to anyone who was not a member of their people so not only was finding a Chiss out in the desert of all places odd, it was strangely ironic.

Though, he broke out of his stupor when the young Chiss male began coughing and sputtering. There was no blood, though saliva began leaking out of the corner of his mouth and he was showing obvious signs of pain and distress. Appius knew what had caused this. He had collided with a rock after just after he leaped from his bike. Chances are he's got cracked or broken ribs and passed out from the pain. Or worse, damaged organs.

Appius put his hand on the Chiss man's rib cage and confirmed his suspicions. Without a moment's thought or hesitation he dropped to his knees and placed his hands on the young man's ribs. Waves of healing energy began to descend on the young man. His breathing slowly but surely began to calm and his pain was easing as every minute passed.

One hour later.

His eyes slowly opened. Conscientious beginning to be a part of him once again. He was sat upright against something hard, yet strangely cool and there seemed to be some sort of burning wreckage illuminating his surroundings. What happened? Was he dead?

He tried to move but pain tinged him in his ribs. Wait, yes he remembered now. His Speeder Bike was destroyed and he had to eject from it but he expected to be more... hurt? Didn't he collide with a boulder?

He looked to his left and saw the man he had tried to attack sat on his knees, eyes closed and with a lightsaber hilt floating in front of him.

'A Jedi... typical.' he thought, cursing his luck, he should have realized a lot sooner but in the heat of the moment when your blood is full on adrenaline such thoughts can slip past your mind.

A fire burned next to them and he instantly recognized it as part of his Speeder Bike. Or perhaps now his... former speeder bike. He looked over at the Jedi who seemed far too deep into his meditation to realise he was awake. Maybe he could get away if he could just move quietly enough. He attempted to stand but as he shuffled an intense pain shot through his chest. His back and neck arched and he let out a loud gasp.

"Oh! You're awake!" Appius exclaimed surprisingly.

The sound had woken the young Jedi from his meditation. The lightsaber hilt had dropped from mid-air only to be caught by him before it hit the ground and placed back into the Jedi's robe. He then jumped to his feet with a burst of energy.

The Chiss however, was fairly alarmed. This was a man he had just tried to kill after all and he wouldn't be surprised if he just waited until he was awake to finish the job in an act of vengeance..

"You are really damn lucky it was nothing too serious. I can do a lot with the Force to aid injuries. Heal torn muscles. Mend broken bones. But repairing an organ... that is something way out of my power. The way you hit that boulder I was expecting a collapsed lung at the least but nope! Just a few broken ribs and a whole lot of pain. Nothing I can't handle."

The Chiss tried to move again and once again pain filled his chest. It didn't feel like broken ribs but it was certainly sore. He couldn't run or even stand on his own power for that matter, at least not yet.

"Oh, you'll be a bit sore for the next couple of days but after that you'll be right as rain again." Explained Appius, sensing the Chiss' confusion.

"So what's your name?" Asked Appius.

Nothing. Stone cold silence filled the air around them and the Jedi just sighed in frustration.

"You just tried to kill me and I healed your wounds. If you had tried this on literally anyone else on this planet they would have killed you on the spot. The least you could do is give me your name." Appius said, his tone had deepened and had become very serious. A complete one-eighty from his cheery attitude a moment ago. It almost sounded slightly betrayed.

The Chiss' eyes darted downwards and Appius thought he could feel a sense of shame emanating from the young man. He didn't need to use the Force to determine this. Appius was naturally a very empathetic person.

"Drax Callian..." Spoke the Chiss. His voice dry and coarse.

Appius gave a big hearty smile. He got a name! He was making progress!

"Pleasure to meet you Drax. I'm Appius Wight. A Jedi of Clan Vizsla."

Drax's eyes widened and sweat started to drip down his face. He inspected the Jedi's clothing and sure enough there it was. The symbol of Clan Vizsla stitched into his robes. Clan Vizsla had become infamous across Zsoldos for their swift action on tackling tasks, bounties and missions they were paid for. They were ruthless and unforgiving and did whatever they needed to to get the job done. Needless to say if you were on their hitlist you were as good as dead.

And he had just attacked one of their members.

The Jedi reached into his robes and Drax recoiled slightly. This was it. He was right! He was just waiting until he was conscious to kill him so he could enact his vengeance!

Only what Appius retrieved from his robes wasn't a weapon, but a plain old metal flask with the initials A.W inscribed into it. He held it out to Drax who just glared at it.

"Here." Said Appius. "It's just water. It's warm though... sorry about that."

Drax accepted it cautiously and took a small sip. Appius was telling the truth. It was definitely warm and definitely disgusting due to that fact. Though it certainly helped clear his throat. He handed the flask back to the Jedi.

"Thank you." Said Drax quietly attempting to avoid eye contact.

"You're welcome." Replied Appius with a smile.

They went silent again for a few moments as Drax started to get a bearing on his surroundings. He suddenly recognized the steel he was sat up against as the Jedi's ship. Appius must have moved him after healing him though one thing still confused him.

"How did that get over here?"

He was referring to the burning pyre keeping illuminating them both. He recognised it as part of his broken speeder bike but as far as he was aware he had crashed much farther away than this.

"Oh that?" Appius said, pointing at the burning pyre.

Appius then held out one hand towards the burning wreckage and focused his mind, reaching out with the power of the force he grabbed hold out the burning pieces of metal. Before Drax's very eyes the wreckage began to float in mid air just a couple of feet off the ground before being gently placed back down. The young Jedi had used Telekinesis to take a small part of the wreckage that was burning and moved it over in this direction.

Once the burning metal had been placed back down carefully Appius threw his arms up triumphantly.

"Ta Da!" Said Appius as theatrically as he could. He then took a bow akin to a performer completing a successful magic act.

"And now for my next trick!" He then exclaimed. Making a melodramatic pose with his hands.

He had expected some sort of response out of Drax but he got nothing. Clearly humor wasn't going to get through to him.

"Not in the mood huh? Alright, that's understandable I suppose." Said Appius.

"Why haven't you killed me?" Drax suddenly bellowed out. It was disturbing him that the Jedi was being so casual about all of this. Unfortunately the way he spoke irked the young Jedi.

"Because maybe you are lucky enough to run into the one person on this planet who wouldn't kill someone who attacked him." Retorted Appius. A pause occurred between them, clearly Drax had hit a nerve.

Appius put his right hand to his forehead and calmed himself.

"I hate killing. My mother died giving birth to me. My father, he... died years later... I was completely alone after that so I spent a lot of time hopping from world to world searching for a purpose for my life."

His tone then deepened once again and Drax could feel the emotion the Jedi was emanating.

"I've seen many horrible things Drax. Underworld gangs beating the hell out of women and children for sport. I've laid witness to the carnage of battlefields and watched as lives were snuffed out without so much as a thought. Some sick bastards even enjoy it. You've already figured out I'm a Jedi by now. I believe every living being is connected to the force in one way or another and has a purpose. Sometimes? Yes. Death is unavoidable. I might not like to kill but that doesn't mean I haven't had to before. I'm part of Clan Vizsla after all. We get bounties flooding the offices daily but the universe isn't all black and white like that. It's many different shades of grey and sometimes justice has to be served. But if I can just do something, however small to make it better... You'd be surprised how far a small act can go in a universe as big as this."

He looked at Drax who seemed captivated by what he was saying.

"Sorry, didn't mean to go on like that." Appius said apologetically.

Drax didn't say anything, what could he possibly say at a time like this? Silence descended on them again. Only the flickering of flames from the pyre penetrated the silence. A few minutes passed before any more words were spoken.

"I need money..." Drax suddenly muttered quietly. It seemed like he was finally ready to open up.

Appius didn't respond immediately. Partially because he was surprised Drax had even said anything and partially because of what he said.

"Really? That's it? You went to all this trouble just for money? " Appius asked stunned.

"There's more to it than just that." Drax replied back. His tone was still quiet and Appius thought he could feel something deep in Drax's very core. Though he couldn't tell what.

"Ok." Appius replied, motioning for Drax to continue.

Drax pulled a hologram out of his pocket and held it out in the palm of his hand. He activated it and the image of a beautiful young Chiss woman appeared. She had long flowing black hair, blue skin and red eyes that were the dominant characteristics of the Chiss. However, one thing stood out to Appius. Her smile. She smiled warmly with love and affection and came across to him as very pure of heart.

"My wife." Said Drax.

Appius didn't say anything but instead nodded his head, giving him the sign he was listening and gave a slight hand gesture that signalled Drax to continue.

"We were childhood sweethearts. Our families knew each other so we were always together. We started out just as friends and then we developed feelings for each other. Those feelings then turned to love and one thing led to another until we finally got married about three years ago."

Drax seemed almost content to talk about her so much so that a small smile appeared on his face. It was a side of him Appius hadn't seen until just now but then the Chiss' face soured.

"But that all changed last year. She was diagnosed with a rare virus that seemingly has no known cure. Its known as the Neutre Virus and it... prevents the body from being able to carry children. Meaning she will never be a mother. All she ever wanted as long as I've known her was a family of her own. Children of her own to cradle and look after and to have that taken from her... it was like her very soul was ripped out of her. She lost her reason to live when she found out. Jedi, she is my rock, my life, everything I could have asked her for and I couldn't even do anything for her!"

Drax couldn't stop the flow of tears that began to trickle down his face. He tried to hide his head in his hands in a vain attempt at covering them. But Appius, being who he was, wouldn't leave someone in emotional distress to be alone. He sat down next to Drax and put his arm on the young Chiss males shoulder and rubbed it comfortingly. He didn't need to say anything, just be there in the moment with him right now.

"We left home in order to find a cure. Something... anything in order to find a way... to start our family. We searched everywhere, asked scientists, medical professionals, even force sensitives and there was nothing anyone could do. Our money began to run low so we came to the only place we could afford to go. Zsoldos."

Appius remained silent through it all, just taking in the words that Drax was saying. Being present and attentive. Drax had stopped crying and had managed to calm himself with Appius' aid.

"We didn't have any money left once we arrived and the stress of travel had gotten to her. Making her more ill. I trained as a vehicle mechanic and computers expert back on Csilla so I took a job at the Jasper Spaceport tending to the ships and speeders. The idea was to build up some funds so we could continue our search throughout the galaxy. Unfortunately the job doesn't pay very well. It could be years before we save up enough funds to travel again so..."

Appius didn't catch on immediately but after a minute or so the gears in his head turned and he clicked on.

"So it was you. You hacked the vehicle."

Drax nodded his head slowly.

"I've worked at Jasper for about ten months. Learnt every vehicle inside and out both mechanically and electronically. My plan was to take one of the less important vehicles. One that had a good price and hack the computer system, then set a coordinate for the middle of this desert. I'd then... take care of the driver."

He looked at Appius solemnly before looking down at the sand at his feet.

"I would then take the ship and sell it on the black market and me and my wife would be off this planet before anyone knew any different. I would do anything for her Jedi. Even this."

Appius took in all this information that Drax had just told him. Though there was one thing that didn't make sense to him.

"Why didn't you just take the ship from the spaceport? Wouldn't that have been easier than doing all of this?" Asked Appius.

"Because if I took it from the spaceport myself they would have caught me instantly and I would have become a wanted man. I needed someone else to be the scapegoat. I couldn't take the ship and leave the planet either because someone would be looking for it. I'd have a bounty on my head and how would I even explain that to my wife? I don't want to put more stress on her than I have to."

Appius just chuckled to himself slightly. Drax almost looked slightly offended until Appius examined himself.

"Your devotion to her is admirable but you need to rethink how not to put stress on your wife because honestly? This isn't how to do it. Does she even know you are out here?"

"No. As far as she knows I'm on the night shift at the spaceport." Drax was quick to answer. Of course he wouldn't tell her what he was up to.

"Then how do you think she would feel about what your doing right now?"

That question cut through Drax like a lightsaber through raw flesh. He felt distraught and ashamed that he had resorted to such actions without thinking of the consequences. Appius knew his question would hurt the young Chiss but he also knew that sometimes in order to see things clearly you had to see things from a different perspective.

"She'd call me a massive idiot and try to slap some sense into me."

Appius couldn't help but laugh at Drax's comment.

"Sorry, that's a funny image." The young Jedi continued laughing whole-heartedly. Considering this man had just tried to kill him, the image of his wife scolding him for it was quite funny to him.

Drax couldn't help but chuckle along with Appius' laugh. What could he say? It was infectious and it really helped to lighten the weight on his shoulders, even if only for a moment. Speaking of Appius, now that the young Chiss had calmed down the young Jedi had stood up and was now pacing in the sand, hands under his chin, deep in thought. Drax assumed Appius was thinking about what to do with him. He decided to break Appius' train of thought with a single question.

"Are you going to turn me in?" Now, there was no police force on Zsoldos. Most towns and cities were run by the citizens and perhaps group leaders that had their anarchistic set of rules. But Appius knew what he meant. Was he going to turn him into Clan Vizsla for interrupting his mission and attacking him?

"No. Actually, I have a better idea." Appius said with a smile. Suddenly proud of the idea that came to him. Drax had a sudden bad feeling overcome him. Sensing this feeling, Appius decided to explain himself.

"Look, hear me out. You were able to hack a vehicle and coordinate an attack against me all without anyone noticing and all by yourself too. If this was against someone else who knows? This might have worked. I'm no expert but this takes a lot of skill. Skill that not everyone has. Clan Vizsla could use something like that."

"What are you suggesting?" Drax couldn't believe his own ears. Was the Jedi seriously suggesting what he thought he was. He certainly had his interest piqued that was for sure.

"I can't promise anything, but I can have a word with the higher ups of the Clan. Your talents could be valuable to us. You say you want to get off Zsoldos? We get missions that require us to often go off world so often it isn't funny. So you can go searching for a cure on the side whilst your on these distant worlds and your wife doesn't have to go travelling. It's a win win."

Drax considered this for a moment. He knew the Clan was paid well and becoming a part of them could solve all his money troubles. He didn't have to be on the front lines either. He could do vehicle maintenance, electronics and provide hacking tools for the Clan.

"Do you think they will accept me? I did attack you..." uncertainty clouded his mind. He was unsure how he would be treated once the news got out he attacked one of Clan Vizsla's members.

Appius shrugged.

"We can certainly try. Don't worry about the fact you attacked me. I can vouch for you. At the end of the day what other choice do you have?"

That was true. This could be Drax's golden opportunity to do something to earn more money and to help his wife. It could be this, or continue to slave away at the Jasper Spaceport, unsure as to whether he would next be able to go travelling. Appius outstretched his hand to him.

"Do we have a deal?"

Drax stared at his hand for a moment, contemplating his options. He then made eye contact with the Jedi before accepting his hand, taking it with his own.

"Deal."

Appius was elated not only had he avoided killing his attacker he felt he had managed to gain a potential new ally out of this situation. He shook Drax's hand, although there was still one last thing remaining.

"Though I do want one thing in return. You know, for sparing your life and all."

Drax looked up at the young Jedi.

"And what's that?" Drax asked curiously.

Appius smiled at him and pointed up to his ship that at this point had been stuck in the sand for the best part of a couple of hours.

"Can you fix it? If so I can get us out of here." Said Appius.

"Yes. I can." Drax stated.

Appius held out his hand and the Chiss accepted it with new found vigour. Pain still resonated in Drax's chest though with help from Appius he was able to get up and into the ship. After a few minutes of tinkering with the computers the HH-87 Starhopper's engines whirred into life creating a sandstorm from the pit it was buried in. After a minute the dust

cleared and the ship was completely free and back to life like nothing had ever happened. All the computer systems were reactivated and complete control was handed back to Appius' once again. He hopped into the pilots seat next to Drax.

"Thanks." Said Appius sincerely.

"Your welcome." Drax smiled back. He didn't know what was going to happen now, but at least now he could hope. Hope for a better future for him and a better future for his wife.

They were silent during the flight to Yuanming so all Appius could do was contemplate the events of the night and the events to come. He wasn't sure what was going to happen once they got to Yuanming. But one thing was for certain. He was nearly three hours late for his delivery...

He had quite some explaining to do.

-THE END-