

## Members

**Brimstone #8649**

[Brimstone's CS](#)

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**Muse/Taranae #13721**

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### **Lyra-3K-a system**

**37 ABY**

Clan Plagueis was alerted by the Iron Throne that all available units needed to make their way to the moon of Thillion to recover an artifact that was found by the Lyra Colony researchers. Secret transmissions were found that had been sent out before there was a disruption of all communication in the system.

Asking for volunteers, Brimstone was first to accept. He figured it was a good time for him to prove his worth, especially since many were wary of him after his failure as commander of the \*Predominant\* that was destroyed years earlier. The Sith was a decent pilot and warrior and with his ship, the \*Nehso Retan'ci (Black Silence)\*, he figured with its advance electronics in stealth and jamming technology, along with his droid, K'ebatas, he could easily infiltrate the base without detection and hopefully get in to the location of the research facility and find the artifact that was there.

As he was getting his ship prepped for its journey, he was approached by a female Twi'lek, "Hey Brim, got room for one more on that vessel for a mercenary?" she asked.

"Sure, and you are?"

"Sorry, my name is Muse Nashesir, I know you don't know me, but we have an acquaintance in common. You might remember a Taranae Rhode."

"Ah, my former apprentice. Haven't heard from her in a long while. If you're friends with her, I guess she's told you about me, and not for the better" replied the Chiss with a smirk.

"Yeah, she said you were very manipulative and extremely strictly business minded."

The two of them continued to discuss the upcoming incursion and getting familiar with each other. As they loaded his ship, Muse noticed a 3PO protocol droid at the navigation terminal inside. "Greetings, I am K'batas, and you are?" asked the black as night droid.

Brim was behind Muse as they came up the ramp. "This is Muse. She's a friend of Tara."

"Oh Mistress Rhode. I know of her. Great warrior, better conversationalist."

Muse laughed out loud at the droid's last remark. She then noticed a fourth seat in the ship. "Are we expecting another to join us?" she asked.

Brimstone tensed up. Even though she had no skills in the Force, she could read body language pretty well. "He's already here" replied the droid, "he's in the cargo hold."

"K'ebatas, quiet. He's to remain in seclusion till we leave the fleet. You know the rules."

The Corsair didn't ask anything else. "Sometimes it's best to skirt the rules, even in war" she thought.

As Muse took her seat on the flight deck and the preflight checks were carried out, her mind wandered to the other unknown member of the team that sat in the cargo hold. She wondered who it could be and why they should be kept out of sight of everyone until they were away. What had they done to undergo such treatment? She shuddered at the thought and turned her attention back to the droid and Brimstone. She could see why Taranae must have had trouble not falling under his control; the power literally rolled off the Chiss in waves and she could sense he would be a major asset in the coming war. How had she gotten into this mess? Life as a mercenary was good after her job at the spaceport loading and unloading goods. It was more exciting. But war? She didn't think she was prepared. She knew Taranae had lived through her fair share of wars and battles, even knew that one battle had scarred her for life. Now her best friend was a loose cannon if she ever became too angry or lost too many team members.

A noise from the direction of the boarding ramp broke her from her reverie and she jumped out of her chair, unclipping her blaster. Brim glanced towards the open door and motioned with his hand for Muse to stand down.

'Trust me, young Muse. You don't want to fire on your best friend.'

Muse's eyes widened as a figure stepped into the doorway wearing a red cloak with the hood pulled up. The front of the hood sagged over her eyes, hiding most of her face, but Muse knew in an instant who stood before her.

'Taranae!' she yelled, as she leapt forward to embrace her friend. Her arms flew wide as Taranae looked up and grinned. She was so happy to see Muse. They didn't have much time together in the Brotherhood owing to having so many duties. Now, they would spend an entire mission together.

'How's it going, Blue?' quipped the Sith as they embraced. 'Good to see you again. Hello, Brim' she added, addressing her former Master. 'Thought you could use some help maybe.'

Brimstone nodded at his former apprentice, then turned towards the cockpit, motioning to his droid it was time to head out. The droid hit the ramp closure button, making it clank shut as it closed.

"\*Nehso Retan'ci\*, this is \*Vigilant\* control. You are cleared for departure. Good luck."

"Thank you \*Vigilant\*, you also" replied K'ebatas.

The blackened firespray ignited its maneuvering vents and lifted off the durasteel, swiveled 180 degrees, and passed through the hangar bay's barrier into space. Once a good distance from the fleet, it ignited its hyperdrive and vanished into the darkness of space. Two jumps later, it left hyperspace into an unknown part of the Lyra system and stayed on an auto course.

"K'ebatas, take control. We have some planning to do" spoke the Chiss.

He made his way through to the personnel compartment where Muse and Tara were situated. "Ok, it is clear Brine,"

"Brine?" asked Taranae.

Seconds later, another Chiss came out of the cargo hold. Tara was staring at an exact duplicate of her former Master, minus the facial hair. "Tara, Muse, I introduce you to my brother, Brinestone."

"Brim we really gotta get me introduced to your clan soon, I am getting tired of the cramped cargo hold I have to hide in all the time," exclaimed Brine.

"How are there two of you, Brim? I mean, minus the facial hair, he is an identical twin of you" asked Tara.

"Remember when I told you of my time after Tarentum where I was captured by an unknown alien species? Well, they created clones of their captives and Brine here is one of those clones. They had hoped to replace me with him to infiltrate the Brotherhood with their own spies. They had others too, but those have been caught and destroyed."

"And that is why you haven't told anyone about him, isn't it?" asked Muse.

"Exactly. They would kill him and possibly me because they would assume I was a clone also."

Tara just shook her head. "I can see the new Dread we have having a problem with him, and she would definitely kill you just because." They both watched as Brine took a seat across from them. "What other news you have to surprise me with Brim? What's next, he was hidden on Naboo?"

Both Chiss just gave each other \*the look\*.

“Aww, hell no you didn’t!” she exclaimed. ‘That would explain why the last time I was there, during my sabbatical, I felt a familiar presence somewhere around me. I just assumed that it being the Emperor’s old homeworld, that was it.”

“What Emperor, Tara? You mean the one that died over 30 years ago?” asked Muse. She didn’t need the answer as it never came, but knew it was what it was.

“Well back to what we are here for” spoke Brim, “We are on our way to the moon of Thillion, actually the dark side of the moon. A secret laboratory is there of the Principate. We have to get in and recover an artifact before the Collective does. We need to stop them from obtaining all the pieces of the weapon they are creating that would obliterate all beings attuned to the Force.”

“Which would destroy most of the Brotherhood” replied Tara.

“So what I was thinking was we split into two teams. I go with Tara and Muse, you take Brine.”

“Why can’t I go with Tara?” asked the mercenary.

“Because, and Tara knows this, personal attachments are a weakness that will risk the mission. You and her have a connection. Plus, she has surpassed me and would have better chances to work with someone without any personal feelings for.”

Taranae knew what her former Master meant. “He’s correct, Muse. You go with him anyways, he’s good with blasters so you’ll both get along.”

“And I have no say in this at all?” quipped Brinestone

“No.”

As they continued to discuss the details of the plans, the ship kept flying to the next jump point.

Reaching the jump point was uneventful and the ship jumped to its new destination - the moon of Thillion. Muse watched as the stars flashed by. It was a sight that always amazed her, no matter what. Brimstone sat chatting to Taranae, obviously making plans together. Brine walked up and sat in front of the Twi’lek, leaning forward in his chair as he spoke.

“So it’s to be me and you in this,” he commented. “What do you know of the sith, Taranae?”

“She’s my best friend from childhood.” she replied. “We’ve always been there for each other. She took a ship and came out here. I followed the tracking beacon to find her and \*this\*.” She motioned around her, indicating everything to do with the Brotherhood.

“Once I arrived I enlisted as a mercenary to blend in and find her. Now it seems I’m here for the long haul.” She sighed heavily as she gazed at Taranae and Brim in deep conversation.

“She knows I’d do anything for her.” she said. “But we can’t always protect the ones we love completely. One day, she or I will make a mistake. It’s one thought I have to live with all my life. But I’ve seen her fight. She’s a demon. If she’s ever angered, get out of there unless you value your life. She won’t hesitate to kill any who stand in her way once she turns nasty. Even I move away once her anger is evident.”

Brine thought on this and a slight smile played across his face.

“Looks like Brim is in perfect company then.” he returned. “He loves a good fight.”

Muse nodded, knowing all too well Brimstone’s reputation for recklessness. It was he who brought her friend into the Brotherhood and had taught her well.

The ship exited hyperspace and stopped abruptly. Ahead of them was Thillion and its moon, their target.

“We’ll need to get in close and quietly.” Brim said. “We don’t want them seeing or hearing us land. Head around the moon and find us a place to land away from the laboratory so we can walk on foot. The less resistance we meet, the easier this plan will work.”

K’ebatas punched in coordinates and the ship began to move. The party headed off to prepare for what could be a very dangerous mission. Muse checked her blasters and grenades. She would only use the latter as a last resort to cut down on noise. She took her medkit, computer spikes and her shield generator. She knew she was lucky, but one could not always rely on Lady Luck to get you out of every sticky situation. She retraced her steps back to the cockpit to find everyone else ready to go. The moon’s surface filled the viewscreen now and the ship was coming in to land behind a small hill which should hide it from view of the lab.

K’ebatas opened the boarding ramp with an audible clunk and the group reached the bottom of it and stepped onto the surface. It was cold. The dark side of any moon had no light from an orbiting sun and the temperature reflected the fact. Muse shivered and walked on in misery as she followed Brimstone and Taranae.

“Cheer up,” said Brine. “It’ll be warmer inside. More hostile, but warmer.”

This did nothing to cheer up the Twi’lek as she shivered again.

“Not much further” shouted Brim from ahead, as the party picked up the pace. “Brine, you and Muse head into that eastern entrance. Stay low, stay quiet. We’ll head into the north entrance. I’ve sent a map to your datapads to follow. The artifact seems to be in a chamber to the northeast. That’s why our entrances are east and north.”

All the team members nodded as they scanned their pads as they walked. “We survey the area, quietly take out any forces if possible and meet at the room containing the artifact. Got that?”

Another nod from everyone and the rest of the walk was silent as the situation played through everyone's minds. The two teams headed off in their different directions and Muse followed Brine to the eastern entrance.

Two Principate guards stood at the door as they approached. Crouching, they ducked behind the side rails of the ramp leading up into the complex. Brine motioned for the Twi'lek to be quiet as he touched his lips with his fingers and he crept toward the first of the soldiers who had his back to them. Quickly, he whipped out a curved blade and pulled the soldier over the bars, covering his mouth. He slashed the blade across his neck and all was silent. Motioning, he told Muse to fire on the other as the rest of the coast was clear. Unclipping the safety on her blaster, she took aim as the remaining soldier turned around to find his companion missing. He looked around and jerked as Muse's blaster shot hit him in the back of the head, killing him instantly.

She crept forward and joined Brine who gave her a thumbs-up and they half-crouched as they moved forward into the complex.

As Muse and Brinestone made their way on one side of the complex, Brimstone and Taranae took their way and time to their target.

"Brim, why did you have Muse go with Brine? They've never worked together?"

"Remember how I had you training where you worked with others you had no idea of? Well, I would like to see how well your mercenary and my assassin work together. I think if it works well, they could be a very good team."

The two former Master and Apprentice made their way through the corridors. Everyone once in a while, they came up on Principate guards and dispatched them quick and swift, then hid their bodies to hide all evidence they were there. Tara moved ahead and looked through a dura glass porthole into an adjacent room. She motioned to the Chiss to come over. "Looks like the Collective are already here," she whispered.

"Unfortunate for them, m'lady."

Taranae smiled when Brim said \*M'Lady\*. It made her feel good that he acknowledged her surpassing him in every way. She watched as Brim placed a hand on the door and concentrated. A second later, the entire room went extremely bright as Brim used the Force to enhance all light within like a flash grenade. The soldiers inside were suddenly confused and bumping into each other as they searched for the control panel to turn the lights down. Tara used that distraction to thrust open the door and dive in, drawing her lightsaber and igniting it amidst the chaos. They never saw what was coming as she quickly sliced off their heads before they could even reach for a blaster.

Brim released his grip on the light and the normal ambiance returned, showcasing the red-head's handywork. Five dead bodies laid splattered on the floor, minus their heads. A nod to each other was all that was needed to continue on their way to the laboratories.

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Muse and Brine continued their way to the location they were told by the droid on the ship. The pair was still unaware of each other's tendencies, but so far, it was working well. After approximately thirty minutes, they finally made it to their objective. Muse looked it over and they decided on a plan. She grabbed her comm and beeped Taranae.

"Tara, this is Muse" she whispered, "We are at the coordinates. Where are you?"

"We're just arriving on the other side."

"I see about ten scientists and about fifteen guards within,"

"I see that too. The scientists are not the target, but guards are, and from the looks of it, they are Collective guards" replied the Battlelord.

"So what's the plan?"

Brim chimed in. "Muse, you and Brine go in as Principate security to alert them that the Brotherhood is here, as a distraction. Once they are on one side of the room, we'll bust in and you shoot at us. We'll deflect the shots back and then you both help take out the guards with us."

As they took positions on both sides of the lab, Muse hit the button on her door and it opens. She ran in with Brine "The Brotherhood is here, we need to secure the artifact to a safe location" she yelled.

The scientists grab for the artifact and secure it in a case while the soldiers take up a defensive posture towards the door the two had entered. That was the cue for the others to enter. Both Brim and Tara burst inward the other door with the Force together and jump in, lightsabers ablazing. "Watch out!" yelled Muse as she opened fire at the two Plagueians, who in return deflected the blaster bolts.

The soldiers turned around and started to fire also. As soon as they were ignored, Brine pulled out his Ryyk blade and dropped to a crouch, slashing forwards and severing three of the Collective's legs at the knees from behind. Muse aimed at a couple other soldiers and dead-shot them in the backs of their heads. The scientists start screaming. Brim and Tara kept one hand on their lightsabers and with their other hand, unleashed a torrent of blue and green lightning at the other soldiers, hitting them square center. The impact of the lightning send them backwards into the walls and the floors. Brine had grabbed Muse by her utility belt and yanked her out of harm's way seconds before the attack. The mercenary rolled into a crouch and opened fire into the slumping soldiers. Brine waited till the lightning stopped, then leaped with his blade and started to slaughter any that were still living.

As soon as the chaos dissipated, Tara walked over to the scientists and demanded the crate with the artifact. They quickly handed it over trembling. As the Sith took the crate, she headed out with Muse. The two chiss remained behind. Muse then turned to see where they were at and all she could hear were screams that were suddenly silenced. Then the both of them made their exit.

“Did you have to do that?” Muse asked in disgust.

“We don’t leave witnesses to alert anyone of us being here” quietly spoke Brinestone.

The four, with their prize intact, headed out just alarms finally sounded.

Thankfully, most of the Collective had been neutralised on the way into the complex. The team found their exit easily, As they exited, Taranae heard a thump and a curse behind her. She instantly drew he saberstaff and ignited it in one fluid motion as she spun on her heel. Her senses screamed and she brought the blade up and around just in time as something pinged away as it hit it. Bringing her blade to bear in front of her, she let her gaze fall upon two figures wearing nightsister armour. She had heard of these people. The yellow marks under their eyes marked them as hunteresses. The ping she heard had obviously been one of the poison darts that these women were accomplished with using and were renowned for finding their mark.

One of the figures was reloading as Muse also took in the scene. She glanced at Taranae and she nodded in response, narrowing her eyes. Taranae started to spin he saberstaff, gaining the attacker’s attention so that Muse could slowly and quietly draw her relbys. Shooting from the hip, she fired a salvo of shots at not the two assailants, but the sith.

Taranae moved ever so slightly as Muse saw her stance change. With a flick of her wrists, she sent the blaster bolts directly at the attackers as she deflected them with skill. The bolts hit the huntresses directly in the chest, piercing directly through their armour and they dropped, dead to the floor. Brine walked over and kicked one of them.

“Shouldn’t sneak up on people, should ya?” he quipped. “This is Tara, by the way. She gets a little cranky when she’s caught off guard. Oh? You noticed? Well sorry for warning ya.”

He kicked the other and laughed. Brimstone found he couldn’t help but laugh too. Muse chuckled as she replaced her blasters on her hips.

Taking one last look at the lab, all four friends set out for their ship, the crate with the artifact in it carried between them.

\*It was an interesting mission\*, Muse thought. But not many could take them on as a team, it seemed. \*This could work. Maybe we should do this again sometime...\*

“Nicely done, Blue.” said Taranae. “I knew you had it in you.”



Muse smiled as the Sith turned on her former Master. "You could have watched my back, Brim!. We could have been in trouble with that ambush!"

"Nonsense, Tara. I knew I never had to watch your back. You've always been so good at that yourself."