

Artifact Rescue



By Aylin Sajark

Option 1: *DEFEND THE PLATFORM AND AID IN THE EVACUATION*

Ankira came running full speed around the corner with both her Westars in her hands. She had seen a few scholars coming from the hallway that were running for their lives, pushing floating transports with boxes in front of them.

As soon as she ran a few steps down the hallway, she heard the blasters going off from the Collective forces, rounding the second corner she saw them. She didn't have to think twice and opened fire at them, letting her Westars spit out shot after shot, taking out the Collective grunts that were fighting there.

It took them a few moments to notice that they were under fire from a second direction and started shooting back at Ankira as well.

'Good,' Ankira thought as she kept shooting and evading shots, 'Let them focus more on me so the stragglers can escape too.'

Thinning out enough of the Collective forces the other scholars also dared to start moving again with the boxes, crates and tubes holding the precious artifacts that they had collected over time. As some of them passed her they gave her a nod of thanks and continued on.

Moving into the storage room she saw a few more scholars trying to store as much as they could in boxes as she took out the last of the Collectives.

"You need to hurry up, there will be reinforcements soon and I don't know how long I can keep them out of here."

"We are doing our best, but we are with too few to get all the artifacts out," one of them answered.

Glancing around at the items, Ankira frowned, "You need to make choices then, pick the items that seem the most important or valuable and take those with you."

"We are already doing that...But some of them are too large or dangerous to move."

'of course, these things have to be dangerous...' Ankira thought silently. "Do you have other ways to transport those then?"

"We called for one of those loader platforms, but it hasn't arrived yet. We don't even know if it's still in one piece."

"Do you know where it should be coming from?"

"The hangar bay S52, two floors down."

"Okay... You go get all the other stuff together. I will go look for the loader platform and get it here." She started running to the lifts as she turned back to them, "try not to die!"

The group of scholars looked at each other and shook their heads as they continued to gather the artifacts.

Finding little resistance on the lower deck, she moved towards the hangar bay. When she got closer she heard a lot of commotion from the otherside of the doors. They seemed to be discussing where to tow the artifacts they had confiscated already. Listening at the corner of the door opening, she heard them talking about a big transport being stuck because of the equipment going haywire. She chuckled softly, knowing that Aylin would have something to do with that.

Readying her Westars, she stepped around the corner and started shooting the grunts, surprising them with the sudden attack. She took them out quickly, but her victory wasn't lasting long. More of them could be heard hurrying down the other hallways exting into the hangar.

Muttering to herself, she quickly got the loader platform into action and hurried back towards the scholars, but before she could reach the lifts a squad of heavier armoured Collectives were waiting for her. Hiding behind the console of the loader platform she pulled a flash grenade from her belt and activated it. Waiting long enough for them not to be able to toss it back she threw it towards them, shielding her own eyes from the flash. She heard a lot of curses when the grenade exploded and rushed the loader platform forwards towards them, intending to bowl them over while shooting them at the same time.

Taking a few out and knocking others over she had enough time to get onto the lift before their confusion was over. Looking back towards them she fired a few more shots as the doors closed before her. Sighing softly she rested against the wall.

"This place is going to be swarmed by them... if those scholars don't hurry up, we will not have a way of this station," she muttered to herself.

Getting the loader and her blaster ready, the door opened before her. There was silence and smoke, lots of it.

Quickly she hurried down the hallway with the loader platform towards the room she left the scholars at. When she got there, the room was largely destroyed. Various artifacts were broken or burning. The scholars didn't survive the attack on this room by the Collective raiders.

Looking back towards the entrance when she heard another explosion, she quickly got into action. She grabbed anything that was still in one piece and dumped it onto the platform.

Moving towards the exit, she glanced outside before pushing the loader platform out the room and towards the next one. There the same had happened. Here she also gathered what was still in one piece. She continued this until the platform was full.

When she was done she went back to the turbo lifts and ran into another squad of Collective forces.

"Great... more target practice"

Giving a push to the loader platform so it would float out the way, she drew her Westars and ran towards them, closing half the distance between them before letting out a volley of shots at them.

Surprised by her action, it took them a few seconds before they started shooting back at her. A few of them switched to heavier weapons to shoot with. Even though they were with more, they had trouble hitting her as she jumped around the hall with the aid of her rocket boots. It didn't take long before she had taken out two of them, but miscalculated her next move and got hit in her shoulder causing her to lose balance and hit the wall.

Grunting with pain she got to move again before a volley of shots could hit her. She needed to end this quickly before the fuel of her rocket boots ran out. Shooting at them, she took out another one and threw herself into the cover of a crate.

She heard more footsteps coming towards their fight. They sounded heavier than from the others she had been fighting already. Daring a glance from her cover she saw four heavy armoured Collective soldiers join what was left of the squad she had been fighting.

After a few shouts they opened fire at the crate she was hiding behind. The force of the shots knocking the crate against her back with each shot.

'This crate isn't going to hold out much longer...' Ankira thought as she went through her options to finish this fight. Pulling out her explosive lure, she hoped her next plan would work as intended. Priming the explosive she tossed it towards the Collective soldiers. It landed at their feet, but didn't go off as she had hoped.

One of the soldiers noticed the explosive and wanted to warn the others about it. When he started to push his comrade away, the explosives first mine went off, causing the soldiers to get knocked over into all directions and remain on the floor.

Ankira ran from her cover back to the loader platform, knowing that the second explosion would be heavier. She waited behind her platform and kept an eye on the hallway she had come from.

It remained quiet for a long time, but then she heard footsteps again in a husseled march. They came from more directions this time, pinning her in place behind the platform and the load of artifacts.

She started to shoot the soldiers that came from behind her and hoped that the others would come to the fire fight, drawing them into the proximity of the explosive so they would set off the second mine.

It didn't take them long to take the bait as she soldiers rushed towards her location, the second explosive got triggered and exploded. Sending a huge blast wave through the hallways, making the artifacts rattle and moving the platform backwards.

Quickly dispatching the soldiers she started pushing the platform towards the lifts, hoping that one of them survived the blast and was still working. Lucky for her, the furthest was still working and she quickly called it, hoping it would arrive before reinforcements did.

As the doors opened, shots began to fly her way and she quickly pushed the platform onto the lift and hit the buttons, the doors closing behind her.

Panting she looked at the ammo left in her Westars, both were blinking that they were nearly empty. She hoped she didn't run into more heavy resistance, as she was nearly out of fighting power.

When she got out of the lift, she was greeted this time by a group of the Dark Brotherhood. They too had a load of artifacts with them. Together they went to the waiting shuttle and loaded everything on board. The shuttle quickly departed from the station.

When Ankira sat down she realized how much energy it had taken to fight them and the pain in her shoulder was getting worse now, but she survived and with a nice haul of artifacts as well. She just hoped they would be useful to them in the rest of the war.