

Circumstances

A submission for the fiction competition:
[Week 1] Quartermaster Disaster.

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Yavin 4
38 ABY
Secret Collective Hideout

Somehow, somehow, he just knew this was Dasha's fault. It was one thing to continually throw him into various difficult scenarios that usually involved an abhorrent amount of glitter, he'd actually gotten quite used to it in fact. But messing with his equipment? That was new.

And not to mention incredibly irritating. Three times he had been screamed at by the black beady-eyed creature beside him and it took all his willpower not to punt the little frakking beast off a nearby cliff like a mini huttball.

"Porgs... *Tahla'ada ner jibr.*"

He rubbed the bridge of his nose with his fingertips and sighed deeply, the fresh air on Yavin 4 entered his lungs like sweet nectar to bees. It was serene, blissful even, and it was all over the second the porg opened its mouth, it's wail screeched right into Appius' eardrums and he retaliated in kind as jets of lightning soared out the tips of his fingers directly into the body of the tiny beast. It dropped lifelessly to the ground, faintly twitching as electricity coursed through its nervous system before coming to a stop.

"Peace at last!"

With that particular headache now disposed of, he inspected what little else he had in his possession. A datapad filled with nothing but animal noises, a leg from an old protocol droid which made the Taldryanite wonder where the rest of it was. A roll of binding tape that was nearly empty, three small rocks for... whatever reason, an old slugthrower pistol which may or may not be loaded, Appius didn't want to check in case he accidentally blew his brains out, and...

His eyes shot open the breath he held escapes his lungs at the sight of an unopened bottle of white wampa ale.

"Oh, FRAK NO!"

He grabbed the slugthrower from beside him and pulled the trigger. The ammo launched out of the barrel and pierced through the clear glass and shattered it into a thousand pieces. The echo from the shot shook the local wildlife as birds took to the sky in swarms.

"Never... AGAIN!"

There were memories attached to that particular brand of booze he would rather not remember. He was surprised by the pistol suddenly disintegrating into several pieces in his hand. Appius hadn't considered that it might have been so old it would barely work after a single shot.

"Of course it did, why wouldn't it?" He muttered to no one in particular. He tossed the rusty old piece of kark to the side nonchalantly and packed up the rest of his gear. You never knew when you might need to throw someone a leg.

He chuckled to himself and began the brisk walk to the abandoned Rebel stronghold with a spring in his step and a song in his heart. Despite the circumstances, he was actually fairly confident with his mission. A lone Collective Commander hid out here after their failure in the Arx System. He was meant to bring him in dead, no questions asked. Pretty simple, really.

He could already feel the credits in-between his fingers.

It didn't take him long to tread through the dense foliage to reach the hangar to the Revel base. Wide-open and abandoned, it still held an X and Y-Wing within the enclosed space. The stench of old oil and electronics penetrated the air like a neglected factory, not an uncommon experience for makeshift locations such as these. At the far end sat a grey-haired, middle-aged human sitting on a green war crate completely absorbed by the datapad in his hands. So much so he seemed completely oblivious to Appius even being in the room. Well, it certainly made a change from being shot at, that was for sure.

He cautiously stepped forward, his feet created a significant *tap-tap* along the concrete floor. He pulled out his own datapad and tapped a few commands upon the screen, thinking a harsh roaring sound would give him the grand entrance he was looking for.

Instead, he accidentally caused some kind of high pitched squeaking to echo throughout the hangar. He had no idea what animal that was from, but it was certainly far from what the Sorcerer was looking for.

"Aww, come on! Stupid thing..."

Nevertheless, it had intended at least one result he was looking for. The grey-haired man lifted his head up quickly, shock taking over him as his hazel coloured eyes widened at the sight of the Brotherhood member before him.

"Erm... hello there?" Appius said. "Do you mind if I try that again? It's not my datapad, I swear, I just need to get used to it."

His answer was clear when the Force alarmed him of the incoming danger. The Collective Commander quickly drew upon his sidearm and pulled the trigger, a beam of red plasma soared across the distance between the two men before it slammed into the datapad in Appius' hands. It split the electronic in two and sparked as it dropped to the ground.

The grey-haired man prepared to pull the trigger once more and it was at a time like this that Appius wished he hadn't fried that porg from earlier. A high pitched wailing would be a great distraction right about now. Instead, he settled for the next best thing as he grabbed one of the small rocks he believed his apprentice graciously provided and launched it at the other Human in the room. The small stone crashed into the Loyalist's blaster and knocked it slightly to the side as a second red bolt of plasma shot safely out of harm's way.

Appius could see his opportunity as darkness swelled up from within him. He pushed that well of power to his fingertips as a lightning storm erupted from them. The grey-haired man became enveloped in a blanket of swirling white and blue that hissed, chirped, and tore him asunder from the outside in. He wanted to scream, to vent the agony and torture his body was being put through. After a few moments, his body dropped onto the floor face first.

Despite the smoke that rose from his body and the lingering smell of singed flesh that hung in the air, Appius was far from done. Raising both hands, he gripped around one of the last remaining X-Wings like a crane, carefully lifting it and slowly moving it above his target's lower body. Appius closed his eyes, beads of sweat began to drip down his face as veins showed themselves upon his flesh, followed very quickly by sweet relief as he relinquished his hold over the heavy fighter.

With its full weight it dropped down onto the Collective Commander's lower body and with a crash that could be heard from a mile away, it completely crushed his legs and lower spine.

Was it overkill? Absolutely. But Appius always did have a flair for the dramatic. Although, thanks to the Force, Appius could feel the man still clung to the faintest shred of life.

He took a deep breath as his heart raced from the exertion. Still, this was the first time he'd managed to lift a starfighter so that was one item scratched off the bucket list!

He walked up to his bounty and inspected the damage that was done. His legs were separated from the rest of his body and he remained lifeless upon the ground.

"Oh! Hang on, I have something for that!" Appius exclaimed as he pulled the protocol droids leg out of his backpack and offered it to the fallen man.

"No?" The Sorcerer inquired, though didn't receive an answer from the unconscious being at his feet. "Suit yourself."

He tossed the mechanical appendage to the side without a care in the world and rubbed his hands gleefully. Sparks jolted between his fingers once more as his lips stretched into a sadistic smirk. After all, they wanted him dead, and he was more than happy to oblige.

A sudden violent surge poured into the Collective man's body, directly into his heart which ceased to beat forevermore.

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