

IRoS: ESCALATION EVENT LONG FICTION - THE HEIST

Kamjin "Maverick" Lap'lamiz - 711 - [Character Sheet](#) - Red Font

DarkHawk Sadow - 264 - [Character Sheet Selector](#) - Blue Font

Cyrsenia Orainn - 16056 - [Character Sheet](#) - Orange Font

NPC's

[Yul's Snapshot](#)

[Ty's Snapshot](#)

Act 1:

Casing the joint

Kamjin Lap'lamiz, Elder of Clan Scholae Palatinae, was used to dominating any room he walked into. His spotless white uniform commanded respect, even with the Empire gone. The door hissed open a hair before he stepped through. The two occupants of the conference room faced the door as it opened; a towering Shaevalian, his Dark Armor adding to his considerable bulk. As if a deliberate contrast, next to him stood a far smaller human, the crown of her head barely above his shoulder. The Shaevalian gave a respectful half-bow, "My liege, do we have our target?"

Kamjin slipped a holodisk into the display unit centered on the table, a pleasant smile on his face as he beckoned both his companions to sit. "Warlord Sadow, Captain Orainn. I am Adept Kamjin Lap'lamiz. We do indeed."

He sat as the hologram sparked to life above the table, first showing a crystal. Even Crysenia Orainn, as dead to the Force as any non-Force user, could tell the real crystal must radiate with power. Kamjin continued, "The crystal is up for auction by the Hutts on Dandoran. Hutts are nothing if not predictable, so we know they'll store it on-planet to minimize the risk of piracy en-route. We know the identity of the Hutt auctioning it, so we have a good idea of where it's being stored. The vault is sealed, because Py'zah the Hutt is naturally worried that *someone* will steal it."

Kamjin paused to laugh and was joined by both Darkhawk Sadow and Crysenia. Darkhawk's normally imposing face was no less imposing with the polite laugh. They sobered quickly, and Kamjin advanced the image to an image of the vault. "This is [Placeholder's] vault. We'll need to confirm the crystal's presence, of course."

Crysenia and Darkhawk leaned into the hologram. Crysenia's emerald eyes flicked over the hologram for a bit before she spoke, "Do we know anything about the security in the vault, and do we know the venue of the auction?"

Kamjin shook his head. "It looks to be a virtual auction, so not likely that we'll be able to intercept it from the winner or right before the auction."

Darkhawk was similarly sweeping the hologram. "I assume they've got a ton of guards. I'm seeing some spots on here that look like natural chokepoints, as well as a few entrapment areas." As he spoke, he gestured to different spots on the hologram.

Crysenia leaned back, apparently satisfied she'd gleaned all she could from the hologram. "I assume we'll need to perform some reconnaissance to get most of the intel we need. If we can get on-planet with some kind of cover identities we should be able to get rough estimates of at least how many people will be in the vault at any given time. It'd be nice to get a droid or something inside to confirm where exactly it is, what routes to avoid, and what traps the hutt has set up so we can actually hammer together a plan."

Kamjin smiled broadly. "Excellent, looks like we have the beginnings of a plan."

"With your permission sir, I think I may have that covered. We could set down remotely and send in *VP*, my trusty little Viper probot. He can recon the surrounding area and get a lay of the land and how many guards we have to deal with outside. It is likely that our hosts have a probot of their own, which would not bring much attention to him if he is spotted."

"Discretion is key to our operation DarkHawk. I much prefer a more low key recon."

"Affirmative sir. *VP* has stealth protocols, he will get us the intel we need and no one will be the wiser.

The Elder smiled, "Very good DH, very good indeed."

"*VP* is loaded up in the *Tāron*, we all can load up our gear and take that if you like. I am sure Ty would enjoy the change of flying with someone of your caliber sir. He is just a little captious when it comes to who he flies with. Even his pilot droid gets irritated with him."

"That takes care of the recon, what about the targets inside the facility?" asked Crysenia.

"What about disguising one of us as one of the guards? That could give us the window we need to get in there and get a closer look. Then call the rest of us when the opportunity is right."

"We won't have a lot of time to wait for this opportunity," replied Kamjin.

"Very true sir, although the two of us who remain back can assist to create that opportunity. Maybe a distraction outside to gain the guards attention?"

The Elder took a moment to process the Warlord's suggestion.

Act 2:

The plan in action / The plan falls apart

The team elected to jump aboard DarkHawk's Decimator with Ty and Ellee at the helm. After loading up their tools of the trade, the Brotherhood agents nestled inside the *Tāron*. The Decimator sported a sleek custom black paint scheme. The only color attached to the ship was the symbol of Gyssh'tyn, the Sun God of Shaevalis Prime painted in blood red above the cockpit.

"Nice ship, DH." Cyrsenia said.

"I acquired the ship from Grand Master Muz. The Grand Master had purchased it believing he could use a secondary ship to stage inside the *Fallen Spear*. Fortunately for me, the Grand Master Muz did not utilize it as he thought he may. So I purchased it from him and Ty has done all the upgrades."

"We are lucky that this bucket of bolts starts at all," Ellee snapped.

"I beg your pardon, you ungrateful tramp! I will have you know, every inch of this vessel I have personally put my hands on to ensure the *Tāron*'s operational readiness!" Ty snapped.

"Yes, and then I, a superior droid to your Duros' geniality, had to come back and correct your mistakes."

The Elder laughed at the squabbling between the two pilots. "DH I can see now why you are a man of few words. This is cheap entertainment you have here."

Ellee made some last minute adjustments as the engines roared to life. "Cheap my advanced processors, you dolt!" Ellee fired back over the hum of the *Tāron*'s engines.

Ty adjusted the engines and the Decimator gingerly lifted off the tarmac, "Here we go", Ty said. The Duros leaned over his pilot's control panel and flipped a series of toggle switches. The ship's landing gear retracted and the "landing gear down" light disengaged from the pilots control panel. Ty then grabbed the throttle quadrant and pushed the throttles forward. Within seconds the Decimator raced out of site. Once the ship broke through the atmosphere, Ty grabbed the hyperdrive throttles and pushed them forward. The jump to lightspeed was instantaneous, leaving nothing but the darkness of space behind them.

The Decimator slammed back into realspace far above the faint blue line that marked the boundary of the Dandoran's atmosphere. The planet was visible from the cockpit, the intermixed masses of blue and green partially hidden by white swirls that marked the world as life-bearing. The orbits of the planet were unusually crowded, a few massive warships interspersed with small bright dots of shuttles, yachts, and starfighters, many descending towards the spaceports that were flooded with unusual traffic.

The comm panel remained silent. Ty glanced at it for a bit. "Either we're too high for Dandoran Control to bother with us, they're overloaded, or there is no Dandoran Control. You never know with Hutt planets."

Ellee's head swiveled to glare at Ty. "Or, more likely, the *Tãron* is such a wreck that nobody has bothered to take another look at her."

Crysenia looked over at Kamjin, then at DarkHawk. "Your crew might be made up of children."

Darkhawk laughed, covering the grumbling that was coming from the Duros pilot. The view screens swung as *Tãron* descended. Black sky dotted with stars faded, giving way to a sky that shifted from a pale white to a deep blue as they descended. The comm panel kept up the silence, stubbornly refusing to request vectors, give lane orders, or even assign a docking bay. Ty grumbled at the comm yet again. "Looks like the bays are up for grabs. Any preference, or just the first one that's empty?"

Kamjin leaned over one of the consoles, absent-mindedly careful not to flip any switches, move any levers, or press any buttons as he did so. "I'd prefer on the outskirts of the city if possible, somewhere we can enter and exit without anyone the wiser."

Ty nodded. "Right you are, boss. Keeping an eye out. Hey Ellee, stop being a waste of credits and punch up some info on a good landing spot or something."

Kamjin cut in with a laugh before Ellee could reply. "Very cheap entertainment."

Neither pilot responded, instead they contented themselves with glaring out their respective view screens. After a few seconds of flight, Ty banked left and began to descend. "There we go, edge of the spaceport, nothing around. Suit you?"

Crysenia gave him a pat on the shoulder. "Good eye. It should do nicely."

Ty cut in the repulsorlifts, flaring the Decimator's thrusters for landing. Ellee lowered the landing gear, then started running the checklist to shut down the engine while Ty settled the *Tãron* onto the flat, if dingy landing pad, little more than a duracrete circle next to a dimly lit shed.

DarkHawk went aft as soon as Ty set down, and activated *VP*. The probe floated down the hatch and disappeared off the landing pad in short order. "*VP*'s away, sir. Should be back in a few hours at most."

"Now, I don't know about you sirs, but I could use a drink. I'm sure if we don't find a guard there, we'll at least get an idea of where they might be." Crysenia strode down the ramp.

"Well, there's a bit of a shift in the plan," Kamjin said smirking as he pulled a small trunk out.

The city of Tipool city was abuzz with the excitement of the Hutt's pending auction. The streets were packed with aliens from what must have been a hundred worlds. The street vendors were out in force, peddling their wares to anyone close enough to hear them. In a bizarre change in roles members of the Principate and Revenant broke out into small skirmishes in the street and the Hutt's security forces were having to keep the peace. Kamjin chuckled internally at the absurdity of the sight. Leaning forward, he yelled over the crowd, "Come on you two. Clear a path so we can make it to the casino in time."

DarkHawk and Cyrsenia grumbled through their disguises. Kamjin had supplied them with the full body crimson robes of the Brotherhood of the Beatific Countenance. They waved their Qatameric incense sticks in front of them and half-heartedly chanted the pilgrimage prayer Kamjin had taught them, though they were missing every other word. While the two struggled to walk with their gear on under their robes it was effective in clearing a path through the crowd. If there's one thing that's a constant in the galaxy is that criminals are a superstitious lot. Whether burning a sabacc card when initiated into their criminal order or any of a hundred other rituals, it is rare for a criminal to outright taunt the fates by messing with a pilgrim.

They passed with only minor inconvenience to the entrance of the Garganta Galleria Casino. After a short time in the queue they were stopped by the most hilarious of sights. Someone had decided that the Gamorrean guards needed to be dressed up for the auction and had placed them in the finest of evening wear. They grunted and drooled onto the fine black fabric as they held their vibroaxes. An anxiety ridden Rodian worked the guest list admitting people after reviewing their invitation. Looking up from his datapad at the robed individuals his mouth gaped open.

Kamjin stepped around the two and beamed his best disarming smile. "Greetings good, sir. It seems like you're having quite a time of it tonight," he said.

"Y-yes, quite a busy night. Invitations please," the Rodian responded with an offered hand.

"Of course, not a problem," Kamjin said, reaching into a pocket and removing a piece of paper. "You'll see that it's all in order." As the Rodian took the paper, Kamjin gave a subtle wave of his hand. The Rodian's eyes glazed over as he stared at the blank piece of paper. "Everything in order then I take it?" Kamjin asked with just a hint of impatience.

"Oh...uh, yes, everything is fine here. Enjoy your time at the auction," The Rodian said as he dropped the blank paper. As it blew away into the crowd the three of them advanced into the crowded casino. It was a good thing they weren't actual pilgrims as this site was a decadent hive of sin and vice. Gambling machines of the most dazzling colors flashed as if they were deadly plants attracting prey. A perpetual layer of smoke hung just above the heads of the patrons. The atmospheric cleaners straining just to keep the air to this level of pollution.

“Follow me,” Kamjin said to DarkHawk and Cyrsenia. Taking the lead, Kamjin led them through the crowd towards one of the side hallways. A pit boss stood idly by. As they approached he shuffled over and raised a head.

“May I help you fine patrons?”

“Yes, my associates need to attend their midday prayers. Would you allow us the small courtesy of letting us step into one of the empty conference rooms. They won’t be long,” Kamjin said as DarkHawk and Cyrsenia resumed the chant and waved their incense sticks back and forth.

“Sir, as you’re aware today is a major auction and we cannot be allowing random people to room the hallways.”

“Random? Do you know who I am?” Kamjin started as he raised his voice. “I’m an official representative of the Principate tasked with escorting these two esteemed pilgrims on their holy journey. They have graciously deviated from their holy obligations to allow me to continue to serve the Principate in my own small way here at today’s auction. I cannot and **will not** impose on their generosity further by denying them their time to pray.” A crowd was beginning to gather at the sound of the commotion. Kamjin jabbed his finger into the man’s chest, “What’s your name? I’ll have you know I’m on personal terms with many of the Hutts assembled here today. I want them to know who it is who’s so bigoted against the Brotherhood of the Beatific Countenance that they wouldn’t allow them a moment to pray.”

The pit boss stammered, desperately looking for someone to save him from this situation. The crowd was becoming unruly with chants of ‘let them pray’ starting to break out. Some even threw credit chips at the pit boss demanding the use of the room. Seeing no one was coming to his aid after a pleading look up at the various security camera droids which had appeared he sighed and relented. “Of course, please make use of any of the open conference rooms,” he said with a bow as he stepped out of the way.

The crowd erupted in applause as Kamjin led his associates down the hallway. As soon as they had stepped past the pit boss and the crowd knew there would be no further excitement they melted away towards their previous activities. Walking casually they followed the hallway around the bend before ducking into a conference room. Kamjin sealed the door behind them as DarkHawk and Cyrsenia began to disrobe.

“Sir, I’ll never cease to be impressed by your plans,” DarkHawk offered as he shucked the robe off himself.

“Speak for yourself. I think I sweated off five pounds since we left the ship. Why didn’t you wear a robe?” Cyrsenia said, wiping the sweat from her brow.

“You know, Crysenia, that’s a great question,” Kamjin said as he rushed past her to check the door in the back of the conference room. He put his ear up against the door and listened.

Crysenia huffed, shaking her head in disbelief at the nonanswer from the Elder. After a moment of listening, Kamjin pushed the door open gesturing for the two of them to follow him. Crysenia looked at DarkHawk with pleading eyes to pick up the argument. DarkHawk just shook his head and followed after the elder Sith.

Stepping through the doorway they were greeted by a currently empty service corridor connecting the various conference rooms. Rows of tables and chairs were stacked against the walls. Various carts and equipment were idling around waiting to be used in setting up the rooms for any of a number of different configurations. "Alright, we're going to have to hurry from here. The auction is going to start," Kamjin checked his chronometer on his wrist, "soon."

They broke out into a jog, moving quickly through the maze of hallways. Crysenia lagged behind as she checked the schematic on a holoprojector. "Turn here," she said, as they turned the corner. "Alright, we need to take the third hallway on the left and then we should come to a service lift."

Kamjin kept the count in his head. *One, two, coming up*, he thought as he turned towards the left and came face to face with a Quarren butler and a service droid. Without breaking his stride he launched at the Quarren, wrapping his arm around his neck and using the momentum to swing his body around. The surprised Quarren left out an 'oof' before the force of Kamjin's swinging body snapped his neck with a quiet pop. DarkHawk let loose a knife, a silent woosh cut through the air before connecting with the tangle of wires under the service droid's head. With a small shower of sparks the droid's eyes faded to black.

Kamjin and DarkHawk pulled the two corpses off to the side of the hall. Kamjin grabbed a sheet from a nearby cart and draped it over the two bodies while Crysenia worked on the service lift. "Kamjin, we've got a problem here," she said. Kamjin looked up, then reached under the sheet and ripped off an access badge from the Quarren's body. He tossed it to her and she pressed it against the panel. With a chirp the board went green and the service lift opened.

The three stepped in and Kamjin keyed the lift for the lower level. DarkHawk checked his lightsaber while Crysenia unslung her rifle she had concealed under her disguise. Kamjin unhooked his own lightsaber, exhaling slowly with the familiar weight in his hand. "This next part is going to get messy. No witnesses," he said as the lift chimed with each descending floor. As the door gave its final chime and opened the two Sith exploded out of the lift. Their red lightsabers sprang into existence as they cut down the stunned casino staff. As the workers further away began to react, shots sprang forth from Crysenia's rifle. The impact knocked them forcefully off their feet. Kamjin and DarkHawk continued their dance of destruction clearing out the remaining casino workers.

"No alarms triggered," Crysenia's voice rang out as she advanced cautiously from the lift. The array of destruction left by the two Sith made her choke down the bile in her stomach seeking to escape. Kamjin held his lightsaber causally by his side as he went to check if there were any

other workers around the bend. DarkHawk reached out and ripped an access card off one of the workers. It flew through the air to his awaiting hand.

“Sir, this badge will give us the access we need,” DarkHawk said.

“Good, we’re clear here. The vault is around the next corner,” Kamjin said. DarkHawk and Crysenia rushed to follow Kamjin who had sped off down the hallway in a blur of movement. Before DarkHawk and Crysenia could round the corner they felt the hair on their arms raise moments before the crackling sound echoed down the hallway. Rounding the bend they saw arcs of lightning prance over the electrical conduit. The crumbled, charred, remains of the guards rested at Kamjin’s feet. DarkHawk kicked one of the bodies to the side and placed the access card on the door. Silently it slid open revealing a treasure trove of objects. Regardless of the Hutt they all kept a gaudy amount of treasures. Crysenia advanced, holding the holoprojector with one hand seeking the crystal that matched the one illuminated in the air.

“How’s it coming, Crysenia?” Kamjin asked, staring at his chronometer and counting the seconds.

“Would be quicker without the questions,” she retorted, pushing over several ancient Yavin vases to see what was behind. DarkHawk let out a groan as they crashed upon the floor. He surveyed the room as well, taking in the wondrous objects. From precious skeletons of extinct creatures, golden objects of every shape and size, to ornate weapons, this relatively small vault seemed to hold it all. He turned and beheld a most exquisite tapestry. He stepped forward and looked at the picture woven into its fabric.

“Sir, isn’t this?” he started before Kamjin cut him off.

“Yes, it’s from Alderaan. Crysenia, less than a minute,” Kamjin replied.

Crysenia screamed in frustration as she began ripping open chest. By her fourth one she yelled out, “I’ve got it!”

“Don’t touch it,” Kamjin yelled, as he rushed over. Carefully he reached out his hand and lifted the crystal out of its container. It floated through the air as DarkHawk took out a small pack. Kamjin gently lowered the crystal in as DarkHawk clasped it shut and slung it over his shoulder. Kamjin took out a replica of the crystal and tossed it to Crysenia who placed it quickly into the box, shut it, and put it back where she had found it.

Within moments of the chest being replaced alarm klaxons sounded. “Time’s up, let’s go,” Kamjin ordered, as he raced from the room. As DarkHawk and Crysenia followed, blaster fire leapt after them. Kamjin, daring a look behind him, saw a tangle of Hutt guards scrambling after them. Their assortment of weapons firing constantly trying to connect with the escaping thieves. Kamjin quickly puzzled out their location and skidded rounding another corner.

DarkHawk and Crysena crashed into each other trying to follow. Quickly they scrambled to their feet seeing Kamjin racing ahead towards another service door.

“Kamjin, where are you going? That's not an access point to the upper levels,” DarkHawk screamed as he and Crysena burst through the door into a large hangar bay. The oily smell assaulted his nose as various podracer parts littered the floor as he saw Kamjin leap onto an idling podracer.

Act 3: The Great Escape

“Shut up and grab on!” Kamjin shouted as he wedged himself into the cockpit of the podracer. DarkHawk and Crysena jumped onto the stretched engines, kicking their feet into whatever gaps they could find and holding on. The podracer had been designed for some alien species that was just a fraction smaller than a normal humanoid. Kamjin found his arms pinned to his body and it took a considerable effort to not knee the controls off. The blaster fire impacted against the rear spoiler of the pod forcing Kamjin to accelerate his efforts. Toggling the various switches he was able to get the engines to begin to turnover.

Crysena returned fire over her shoulder. The sound of the metal slug impacting against the armor of their pursuers told Kamjin her aim was true. Awkwardly he grabbed the controls and brought the podracer spinning towards the hangar door. Goosing the throttle the rear pod skidded behind the engines as they rocketed out onto the path towards the race track. As the pod jumped into the air and came bouncing back on its respolifters Crysena's slugthrower was knocked from her hand as she fought to not get thrown from the engine. DarkHawk seemed to be faring better but had his head tucked into his chest muttering something to himself.

“DarkHawk, don't you dare drop that pack,” Kamjin screamed over the howling wind. DarkHawk opened his eyes to stare back at Kamjin with a *What do you think I'm doing* look. Kamjin painfully steered the racer onto the track. With his elbows pinned against his body he could feel the tendons in his forearms stretch painfully with every sharp turn. “Sithspit,” Kamjin cursed as he slammed the controls to port. The engine pods bounced wildly from the maneuver as the electric connector strained to keep them in place. The ground exploded where their pod had been seconds earlier.

“They're shooting at us,” Crysena screamed. Whether the Hutts had notified the patrons or the patrons had just taken it upon themselves they'd never know. Regardless of the reason why the crowd had decided to let loose upon them with all the various weapons at their disposal. Not to be outdone, Kamjin noticed on the rear sensor screen that several swoops and speeders had issued forth from the hangar to chase them down. *This is not how I expected today to end up*, Kamjin thought as he punished his arms with each maneuver. *We're in trouble if we stay out here for long*, Kamjin thought.

“Forget about them shooting. You need to hang on,” Kamjin yelled as he cut the power to the engines and slammed his foot on the rudder sending the pod into a spin. DarkHawk and Crysena screamed as the centrifugal force pulled their bodies away from the engines. The patrons’ shots went wide not knowing how to compensate for the move. The pursuing enforcers over shot them, careening into the edges of the track. Kamjin howled in pain as he pushed the throttle full open and was pinched back into the cockpit. The engines whined as they opened up again and they rocketed back towards the hangar.

“You’re not seriously taking us back there?” DarkHawk screamed back at Kamjin.

“No,” Kamjin replied. *Sithspit, I was going to take us back there,* he thought.

DarkHawk began to reach for his assassins' datapad. He kept a taut grip on an open access panel hole. Slithering one arm into his pack, DarkHawk carefully retrieved the datapad. After hitting a few sequences of buttons DarkHawk carefully kept it tucked into his upper tunic. “Sir, I may have to retract my last statement and tell you, you need to stall for a few moments, so maybe you should take us back there?”

“Why do I need to stall?” Kamjin screamed over the engine roar.

“I believe I have a way to properly secure this damn thing and get it back to the ship. Before the chuckleheads shooting at us get a lucky shot off and this bucket of bolts implodes.”

The Elder nodded, “Hang on you two!”

DarkHawk and Crysena braced themselves as the Elder began a harsh left turn. Pulling the throttle back slightly, then pushing the controls to the left the pod racer began to make its turn. Kamjin strained as he worked the controls, pulling the port engines throttle back to almost nil leaving the starboard sides maxed out. This caused the pod racer to drift hard to port and Kamjin slammed the port throttle forward midway through the maneuver.

Blaster fire bounced off the engine nacelles as the would be pursuers over shot their target and had flown past their target. They overcorrected their maneuver allowing the Elder to put some distance between them. Kamjin kept bobbing and weaving around the track. Crysena and DarkHawk repositioned themselves so they could have a better angle for returning fire.

Crysena readied her slugthrower, DarkHawk secured the Nightsister bow. Their pursuers were turned around now and racing to catch up. Turning towards the Elder, “Take us back about halfway and whip us around again.” DarkHawk held up the scanner and showed the elder an incoming designator headed towards the northernmost curve of the track.

Kamjin raised an eyebrow, “What is that DH?”

“Reinforcement Sir. Tilting the scales in our favor my Liege.”

The Elder smiled, "Keep our six clear,"

"Don't let them flank us," the Elder shouted. The Captain nodded and DarkHawk gave a thumbs up before firing the Nightsister bow. Crysenia adjusted her footing between the various tubings of the engine nacelle and secured her hold. The Captain slammed another clip into her Striker Pistol and quickly emptied it towards her oncoming pursuers. One of the following speeders pilots took two of her shots to the shoulder and went careening off the vehicle. The next closest racer began to close the distance, both Crysenia and DarkHawk laid flat across their speeder to avoid enemy fire. Blaster burns began to color the ground, where the racer was just previously at.

Crysenia began firing and her first volley struck the front of the pursuing racer. DarkHawk's positioning forced him to fire the bow sideways to avoid hitting the pod's rear spoiler. As the pursuing racer veered back right, the Warlord sent three plasma arrows downrange. The first two were short and slightly wide right, the last clipped the left side of the windshield. The shot startled the driver and caused him to yank the controls to veer hard right. The pilot began to make erratic corrections for fear of making an error in his dodging maneuvers.

Kamjin saw that as his opportunity to mimic his drift turn and head back towards their initial escape route. The chaser pod had already made its corrections and was nearly on them when the Elder initiated the turn. As small as the cockpit was, Kamjin's body fought back as he pushed himself to control the maneuver. Crysenia fired off another volley as her pursuers raced past her. One of the slugthrower blasts caught one of the passengers square in the chest. His body was sent careening to the ground rolling end over end. His limbs flailed like wet noodles as he continued to tumble to a stop.

The port engine of the Elder's newly acquired pod racer began to smoke. DarkHawk glanced at the data pad and verified that their reinforcement was near the rendezvous point. The Elder adjusted the throttles with a grimace. They were too loose for his tastes. "I think we may have to ditch this thing soon," he yelled.

"Just get us to that turn sir, we can ditch it after that. These knuckleheads are beginning to really get under my skin!"

"Took you long enough," the Captain said, firing her slugthrower.

"Turn in one hundred meters," Kamjin yelled.

Another speeder moved up on the port side of the fleeing pod racer. Crysenia got another volley of shots off before her chariot veered hard right avoiding a larger boulder. Her shots peppered a Revenant pirate in the chest and he slumped over in his seat.

"Fifty meters!"

The Captain kept firing her slug thrower downrange, forcing the pursuers to constantly adjust their pattern of weaving in and out away from her shots. One of the pursuers fired off two rounds, one round fell short of its target. The second however, hit the base of the spoiler which helped keep Crysenia and DarkHawk from falling off. Shards from the spoiler peppered the two across their upper bodies.

“Twenty five meters...” the Elder exclaimed.

DarkHawk centered his mind and reached out to the Force. Quick flashes of a probot began to fill the Warlord's head. Green foliage flashed through his consciousness, then the track itself. VP reached the coordinates, and it was time to separate the lock from the key. Pulling a smoke grenade from his utility belt, DarkHawk activated the incendiary device. The Warlord slid it between his legs, letting centrifugal force take over and whisked the disc shaped grenade to the rear. The grenade hit the track and bounced a few meters before igniting. A large gray cloud of smoke began to fill the track behind them.

VP's cylindrical head rose from foliage. Smoke trailed from the podracer, Kamjin piloted the craft as close to the track's edge as he could. The starboard engine bounced erratically as it scraped through the greenery.

“Five, Four, Three, Two, One, NOW!”

DarkHawk tossed the pack into the air, then with an extended arm, the Equite guided the pack across a wave of telekinesis Force tendrils. VP had one of its manipulator arms extended, the clawed hand closed down tightly as the pack landed in its grasp. The Viper Probot dropped back down into the green disappearing from sight. The pursuer pods raced through the smoke and regained a visual on their target.

The remaining pursuers took little time to catch up to the rickety pod racer. The starboard engine began to spit and spatter, coughing smoke black as coal. One of the Hutt's men targeted the limping engine and fired a series of shots directly into its exhaust port.

BOOOOM!!! The engine's internals finally gave way and slammed into the ground.

“**JUMP!**” Kamjin screamed.

Crysenia rolled to her left before launching herself towards the thick foliage of the forest. Kamjin was trying to pull himself out of the tight cockpit. DarkHawk extended a hand and yanked the Elder upward before they both launched themselves off the racer.

The two tumbled and rolled to a stop about two meters into the forest. Crysenia was first to her feet and made her way over to check on her partners. Kamjin was getting to his feet as she approached. “You good?” she asked.

“No worse for wear.” Kamjin said.

“Where is DH?”

“Over here. I think I would rather be dead though”

“Well you better get off your rear cause our friends are heading back to finish us off,” Crysenia said with a tone of urgency.

DarkHawk activated his comlink, “Ty, we need immediate extraction.”

“On it, VP is back on board, we are enroute to your location.”

The three scurried off deeper into the woods and they could hear the whine of engines come to a halt. The sound of the Hutt’s men crashing through the forest was near deafening. The three traversed the forest avoiding its natural obstacles until they came to a clearing.

The roar of the Decimator’s engines could be heard, the three positioned themselves for covering fire until Ty was able to set the decimator down enough for them to jump aboard.

Within seconds the forest began to echo the sound of blaster fire as the Hutt’s men came charging in. The team members returned fire, trying to hold their pursuers at bay. Ty brought the Decimator in and spun the ship around lowering the cargo door.

Kamjin and Crysenia thundered up the ramp. Darkhawk was about three steps behind them, losing one last plasma arrow as the ramp closed. Without waiting for orders, Ty slammed the repulsorlifts up to maximum and began to rocket away from the platform. Crysenia dropped into one of the turrets. The turret’s drive whirred as she trained it around. Angry scarlet bolts began to answer the multicolored stream that was reaching up at them from the ground.

Kamjin eased himself into the command chair while DarkHawk got on the other quad turret. Kamjin let out a steadying breath, then started giving commands. “Ty, give me evasive maneuvers and get us out of the atmosphere. Ellee, even shields, keep an eye out for hostiles.”

DarkHawk’s fire joined Crysenia’s in discouraging pursuit. They quickly escaped the reach of the multitude of blasters, their fury spent on the atmosphere long before they reached the rapidly ascending Decimator. Once the fire reaching up at them petered out, Crysenia let her barrels go still as well. She swiveled her turret around and began scanning for threats above them. She had barely turned the turret around when Ellee screamed. “Contact! Uglies inbound, almost directly above us!”

Crysenia caught a bare glimpse of them before Ty rolled the *Tāron* away from them. His voice floated over the intercom. “Two out....Hit!” Ty sent a pair of concussion missiles streaking towards one of the uglies. Twin cobalt streaks merged with the ugly, a mishmashed gaggle of

Y-wing and TIE fighter parts that quickly transformed into a cloud of glittering shards, falling towards the surface of Dandoran.

DarkHawk opened fire with his turret. "Target on my side! This one is shielded!" Bolts skittered off the normally-invisible barrier, leaving behind blue flickering where the shield turns away his fire.

Kamjin looked every inch the calm Elder he was. "Keep up the volume of fire, you two. Don't need to kill them, just keep them busy. Ellee, Ty, The faster we leave this system, the better I'll like it."

Ty grunted. "Well you won't like this, boss. Cruiser veering to head us off." Ty shoved down on the *Tãron*'s stick, leveling out as the view outside just finished fading to complete black. The orbit around Dandoran was filled with far more laser fire than it should've been.

Kamjin laughed, "Looks like most of these people decided they didn't like each other. Good for us."

Crysenia yelped as a single bolt from the massive cruiser squeezed through the shield. Much reduced from its previous intensity, it nonetheless had enough punch to slag one of the four barrels of her turret. "Less talking, more dodging, please!"

Ty began grumbling again. "Always the same with Imps. No 'Good job, Ty.' It's always freaking out and shouting orders." Nevertheless, the *Tãron* rolled, skipping around the cruiser as it did so. Ty shoved the stick down again and slammed the throttle forward.

The *Tãron* rocketed away from the cruiser, weaving a complicated pattern as Ty made them as hard to hit as he could. Ellee spoke up after spending entirely too long on the jump calculations for any of the passengers' comfort. "Jump plotted, Hyperspace in 3...2..."

It was DarkHawk's turn to cry out as the violet-burner of a torpedo streaked in at them. He fired at it, uselessly. "...1!" The torpedo leapt backwards as the Decimator's hyperdrive engaged, launching them away from the planet.

"Yes!" Darkhawk laughed. "I have the best crew, don't I?"