

The Heist
By Thran (#5101) & Dante (#2407)

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Moon of Ragnath
North of Caelestis City
Dante Estate

Sipping his caf on the front deck of their house, Angelo looked out on the beautiful terrain that lay before him. Much like their palatial estate in the Cocytus System, the Dante family had settled down once again in a rural setting. The elder Dante hadn't been around for this resettling following the destruction of their old system. He was still trying to wrap his head around that even after the events of the last few months. One day, he was fighting Michael Halcyon with Fremoc, and the next day that he remembered was waking up in the stasis chamber and seeing Ric's ugly face.

His return hadn't been all that easy, but the Dante clan had been working to overcome it. Leah had almost broken down when Kell returned home from a mission with a massive Mandorian who had turned out to be her husband. Maria had been shocked to see her father when he had pulled off his helm, and she still wasn't quite right with Angelo being back. The two younger Dante children barely remembered their father so that had been a bit easier.

As dusk arrived, Angelo set his drink down and wandered back inside the house. Leah was sitting on the couch in the living area watching a program on the vid-screen. The elder Dante smiled at his wife and said "Mind if I have a seat?" and plopped down next to her.

The former Imperial officer smile back and said "This is just still new to me.. I love having you back, but it's just..."

"For me too... I woke up three months ago, and it turned out I had lost 10 years of my life..." said Angelo as he wrapped his left arm around his wife.

Dandoran
Hutt Sector

Clad in heavy armor, the security forces for the vault complex rolled the heavily fortified container into the safety deposit area. Located 10 levels beneath the surface of the planet, the vault complex was the most secure on the entire planet. Platoons of security forces patrolled

both the inside and outside of the area, and there were numerous locks, alarms, and other physical security mitigation devices throughout the vault system.

Reaching their destination, the officers entered in the special code to the gate on the maximum security area, and then pushed the cart into the open hatch. With the cargo secured, the men walked out of the area and locked it up tight.

Moon of Ragnath
North of Caelestis City
Dante Estate

Morning had come and gone as Angelo put the finishing touches on a chair that he had just built. Although woodworking was a skill that he hadn't used much, he was good at following the plans that he had been given. As he was sanding down the back of the chair, the commlink on his table went off. Nearing a stopping point, Dante reached over and activated the device.

"Dante here..."

A familiar voice responded with "It's Thran.... I will be there later today... Don't tell anyone, but I have a mission for us to work on. Keep it quiet and tell Leah hi for me..."

Seraph
Tokare - Midtown
Penthouse Suite

The view from the high floors of the tower was impressive. The city below was peppered with patches of scaffolding and construction pylons. Additional towers were shooting up from the city streets like the first buds of a spring crop. On the heels of Clan Scholae Palatinae pressing the offensive unto Seraph, many enterprising individuals capitalized on a continent that was begging for growth. Emily Coral was among such enterprising individuals.

Construction was completed on the corporate headquarters of Sal-mal Repulsor two months ago. The primary production facility was set to roll out the first indigenous repulsor craft of the Caperion system in one month's time. Few things provided greater aid to the reconstruction of a conquered society than the caring arm of industry. Salmal's marketing department was openly advertising exactly how much they cared for the people of Seraph with a lengthy list of aggressive construction projects.

She smiled. Her father would be proud of what they were building here.

The office door slid open, drawing her attention from the bustle of the city below. Five ex-soldiers entered, clad in black paramilitary armor.

“Ma’am.” the leader said.

“Captain, I trust you have good news for me?” she replied, turning away from her perch at the window.

“I’m sorry, Ma’am.” he said, diverting his eyes. “We were unable to locate him.”

“Did you look everywhere? The House of the Golden Lotus?” she asked, displeased with the lack of results.

“Affirmative, that was the first place we went. The Madam there said she had not seen him.” the security officer replied.

“I won’t say this again, Captain. Find my husband and do not return until you have located him.”

A buzz from the intercom cut the tension.

“Miss Coral. Message for you from Mr. Kast. He insisted I send it to you immediately.”

Hutt Space Near Dandoran
Modified Strike-class Cruiser

Concern was quickly rising in the ranks of the Expansionist camp. On the heels of mutiny is a tenuous place to begin command, but combined with the curious bedfellows they had found among them as allies tensions were beginning to boil over. Their new found friends were violent and unpredictable. The crew was right to be concerned and this was not the first time they had voiced that to the Captain.

Zyft’s face scrunched and her ears flitted, showing she had grown tired of the list of complaints that had been brought to her.

“That will be enough. I understand your concerns and believe me, I express many of the same reservations. But in this matter I am certain. That is final.” she said flicking her golden eyes back to her desk.

“Capt’n...This man does not share our values. He is reckless and unhinged. He’s a liability. I don’t understa-” he was cut off

“Are you familiar with narcissism?” she asked, looking back up from her work. “No? Allow me to enlighten you. There is a personality disorder in which a person has an inflated sense of self that it becomes pathological. A narcissist craves recognition and praise like a spice addict. This man, he’s a textbook case.” she said, clearing her throat.

“Of the major personality disorders displayed in humans, Narcissism may be one of the most simple to control. It’s just a matter of staying one step ahead. Does he care about us or our cause? No. Is he reckless? Yes. Is he unhinged? Yes. But the Narcissist is nothing if not predictable. So long as we feed his self aggrandizing need for validation, he will do as we say. He will get us that crystal, because I’ve made him believe that he is the only person in this galaxy who can. That is all he needs. He is not a liability, because I have already figured him out.” she said crossing her red furred arms over her chest.

Surface of Dandoran Landing Slip 3

Although temperate invoked thoughts of a nice cool environment, the high humidity greeted the members of the small group of armored troopers as they walked down the ramp and out onto the tarmac. A soft rain came down and left growing puddles all around the landing area.

Clad in various types of armor, the members of Umbra Squad set up a perimeter and began their permission checklist as they awaited the final member of their team.

After a few minutes of bringing supplies out of the ship, Maria looked over at Kell and said “Is he ever going to get out here? He must have drunk three bottles on the way here.” Picking up a box of weapons, she said “I just don’t get why we had to bring him. We could handle this ourselves.”

Beneath his helm, the eldest Dante sibling chuckled and said “I have seen Thran put away way more than that and then go on and lead an attack on thousands of enemy troops.”

Angelo stretched out his arms and flexed in his armor adding “I can’t even begin to start telling you some stories about Thran and his drinking...” The patriarch of the Dante clan had spent years working with the Usurper before his long hiatus, and he thought it a bit amusing that his old friend hadn’t changed all of his ways over the years..

Just then, footsteps could be heard as a figure clad in brilliant robes made his flamboyant entrance to the world of Dandoran.

After first looking up at the clouds in the sky with great disdain, Thran glanced around at the members of Umbra and said “What are you all staring at? Let’s go steal something or kill someone...”

Garganta Galleria Casino
Gaming floor

The entourage had grown in size with each stop at each of the various gaming tables. Roulette, Double-down, Horansi, were the first of the tables the group had stopped at. The invite-only Casino was the type of gaudy that would draw in the likes of Thran Occasus. The floors were an immaculate sea of red velvet and everything was gilded, including the patrons.

The Dante's kept in tow, keeping watch over their ward. Kell kept eyes on a particularly devious looking Devaronian, who kept a stalking watch over their de facto leader. This place was full of predators looking to take down the largest pocketed prey. Some were obvious, like the horned observer. Others hardly seemed like predators at all, but given the right target a pair of clingy Twi'lek girls could be equally dangerous.

Angelo locked eyes with a Pit-boss and stepped forward to intercept before he distracted the giggling women surrounding the inebriated Thran. He put a hand out, stopping the Casino boss mid-stride.

"Mr. Kast is occupied. He is not to be disturbed." the patriarch of the Dante clan said.

Playing security guard for Thran was a regular task for the both of the Dante men. The routine had been committed to muscle memory; Let the women pass, stop any one who looks like they want him to pay the bill. Clad in fine black clothing, the Pit-boss looked like the type of person who would ruin the fun.

"My apologies. My name is Gifn Hadesa, I represent the casino. It is unusual for our guests to have such tight security. The Garganta Galleria is the safest places in the galaxy for high profile people such as Mr. Kast. Though, I understand that a celebrity of his renown requires protection from lesser celebrities. We do not wish to disturb Mr. Kast, we just wanted to extend a 'thank you'. My employers would like to extend a private invitation to Mr. Kast. But, I must speak with him directly." the Kessurian said with a smile.

"Very well. Remain here. Your name, again?" Angelo said, motioning to a trio of Umbra Squad members.

"Gifn Hadesa." he said with a bow.

Angelo turned back to the small crowd that had gathered around Thran. He locked eyes with his son for a moment and gave him a brief nod. The telepathic exchange, though silent, conveyed all the information each had gathered. Angelo marked the Devaronian his boy had been watching and proceeded over to meet Thran. His eyes met Maria's as he passed. She had been nursing a fruity cocktail in a hurricane glass for hours. She was nervous. Where the Dante men had spent time around the debauchery that Thran seemed to conjure wherever he

went, Maria lacked faith that the plan would go off as intended, given the ringleader's apparent inebriation.

He cleared his throat. "Mr. Kast...A Mr Hadresa from the Casino would like a word with you."

Thran leaned into Angelo's ear. "Perfect. They are inviting us to the high rollers auction. Phase one complete."

Garganta Galleria Casino
Penthouse Floor

Angelo had long held that Thran thrived in chaos, but he was never sure whether his old friend created that mayhem around him or if he was drawn like a moth to the flame. Like always, it didn't matter as the result was always the same. Tonight was no exception.

Grinning from ear to ear with a pair of lovely ladies on each arm, Thran led his entourage into the special penthouse suite that served as the private room for special guests. It also happened to be on the same level as the special vault that housed the valuables of the hotel guests.

As the group got off the lift on the 300th floor, Angelo took in the layout of the area. The only way on and off the floor was the one lift that was located in the center of a long hallway with the Player's Club on one end, and the Vault on the other. Both ends had a squad of armored security guards watching over anyone who entered the floor.

Seeing the high end security, Kell looked over at Thran for the signal to end the ruse and go for the vault.

Thran shook his head and said "Let's play!" as he strolled into the club with his arm candy and entourage in tow.

Garganta Galleria Casino
VIP Player's Club

"Gentleman wins again, Four Aces." the dealer said, gathering the pile of chips and dragging them in Thran's direction.

The alien sitting across from him had grown tired of the endless luck that seemed to come his way. With each winning hand, more spectators crowded around the table. Each additional set of eyes seemed to bring his opponent more luck. It wasn't long before the alien's play grew sloppy, he was betting out of position and could no longer hide the anger on his face.

"You cheat! No one is this lucky!" the oily skinned alien screamed, slamming his fists down on the table.

“Be careful what you say next, friend” Thran said, tapping into his finest tough guy character. “You are a cheater! And you will pay with your life!!” the alien moved to grab a hidden blaster, tucked away under his garments.

The wave of panicked gasps that rolled over the crowd quickly crashed as people began to scatter around the tables. Thran pitched the contents of his tumbler onto the alien, who shrieked in pain as the high proof alcohol hit his eyes. He flailed, unleashing a trio of bolts from the drawn pistol. The bolts went wild, knocking over glasses, a chair and sending a cascade of chips falling to the floor. The spectators were in full panic. In seconds there was a stampede of bodies. In moments, several patrons had drawn their own weapons and blaster bolts began flying. Security guards from the casino began to pile into the gaming floor, seeing that a near riot was on their hands.

Garganta Galleria Casino
VIP Vault

The security guards were on high alert after the disturbance in the high roller’s suite, and additional units were on their way up to the floor to deal with the blaster battle that was escalating.

Suddenly, the doors to the VIP suite blew open and blaster fire started coming down the hallway towards the vault. Umbra Squad led the way as they laid down suppressive fire and slowly made their way towards their prize.

A screeching sound could be heard as the entire vault was ripped out of the hotel. In the gaping hold in the roof, Kell could see the freighter pulling away with their prize in tow.

“I never trusted these pirates so I came up with an alternative...” yelled Angelo as he fired off a final blast at the last trooper standing. “Move to the outside wall!”

Kicking open the door to her right, Maria shot out the windows of the refresher, but, instead of a 300 story drop, they were greeted by Petitor Umbrarum being flown by Major Guili and a very pissed off Emily Coral.

Seizing the opportunity, the group jumped onto the top of the ship and headed for the top hatch. Once the entire group was safely inside, the ship accelerated and dropped its altitude as it moved quickly through the tall buildings.

Flying close to the surface to avoid sensors, the Decimator made its way out of the city and towards an uninhabited island a few hundred miles south of the casino.

After about an hour of travel time, they finally arrived at their landing zone that was hidden in a valley with highly steeped walls. Spiraling slowly, Major Guili set the vault onto the ground before releasing the cargo straps before landing next to the hunk of twisted metal.

The ramp dropped, and the crew made their way out to investigate their handiwork. "Well... that is one way to steal a crystal and cover your tracks..." said Maria. She turned and looked at her father "Did you plan this all along?" as she and her brother began using the Force to help get the doors off.

Emily and Thran could be heard arguing on board the ship about how Thran was flirting with all of the women at the casino which led the Dante clan to start smiling as they cracked the doors.

With a loud cracking sound, the front doors of the vault fell off, and the team was able to admire their handiwork. Notwithstanding the crystal that was their main target, the vault was filled with enough valuables to keep their little operation fully funded for a long time.

Angelo smiled and said "I love it when a plan comes together..."