

## Retrieval

Dandoran System

Outer System

Present

The blackness of space remained as inspiring as it was dreadful for Warlord Mauro Wynter. He sat in his Tie-Defender, the Nightmare-II and waited for his prey. The pseudo cloaking device covered his ship in a mask of electromagnetic trickery that would elude all scanners and onboard computer systems any passing ship may deploy. While this would not trick the sentient eye, the Human had other skills at his disposal.

Calling on the Dark side of the Force, the Sith was able to just barely maintain blackness to shroud the small 9 meter craft in impenetrable darkness that no light could pierce. And he need not wait long. The approaching craft was a fast light freighter, uninspiring and what would usually not raise the attention of carrying anything but simple cargo. Any one of hundreds of freighters that were entering and exiting the Dandoran System on regular intervals. No, that was indeed the point thought Mauro Wynter.

Using his telepathy he could feel the fear and apprehension of the skeleton crew. Indeed, it was that fear that aroused his suspicion ever more. This was not the nerves of a small criminal enterprise carrying off a valuable score. No, this was the fear of a pilot and load master being kept under guard with trained blasters at the ready.

“Calm...calm....be ready...fly casual...” Wynter said to himself inside the cockpit – allowing the mental message to travel hoping his affinity was strong enough in the Force to project the message to the crew. Would the message be understood by the crew or the accomplices that had commandeered it and had absconded with the valuable blueprints needed by Arx Capital Enterprises and the Severine Principate.

In a measured manner Wynter slowly pressed forward on the throttle of the nimble Tie-Defender, the pseudo cloaking device giving way as the ship systems crackled to life and the ion engine plume blared into life as the ship approached the freighter. The Warlord opened a communications channel and hailed the light freighter. “This is your first and final warning. Power down your engines and transfer your cargo and you shall live. Do not and you will be space slag in seconds.” He need not wait long for a response.

“Unidentified ship...this is a civilian vessel traversing a space lane. Any hostility will be an act of piracy that will not go unnoticed. System security will be on your tail within minutes. Stand down.” The scared voice assured Wynter that the speaker was the pilot...fearing death in the cold hardness of space. The freighter did not immediately jump to hyperspace. The pilot was indeed stalling.

Wynter took his cue and approached at rapid speed, firing his composite beam laser at close range to sear the engines of the freighter, leaving it idle in space, dead in the water with no means of evasion. The next shot targeted the life support system nodule on the dorsal side of the craft. Wynter winced for a second – the thought of the pilot that had given him this opportunity and had paid for it with his life.

Wynter waited five minutes for the crew to die before flicking on his tractor beam to pull the ship back towards his base to retrieve the blueprints.