

## COMBAT FICTION - MEYRATH RIZARA

*Threat Level: Mey*

*Target: Startouched Researcher*

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He hadn't meant to get involved so deeply. It was the opposite of his intention, really. The leaders droned on and on and *bloody on* about the 'mission parameters', whatever those meant, and all Meyrath really wanted was a smoke. Getting involved meant more meetings, more droning, more sitting in place and waiting for people to finish talking. The war was interesting, sure, but he wasn't the type that wanted to, or *could* for that matter, focus on something boring for more than two minutes.

He snuck out during their 'recess' of sorts and made his way to the back halls with a pack of smokes and his new favourite flask. There was a vent in the ceiling there where he had seen some engineers earlier blowing their own smoke into. They didn't trigger any alarms, so Meyrath marked the location down in his brain for later.

*The back halls weren't busy at least*, he thought as he retrieved a t'bac roll from his pouch. He lit it up with his newly crafted lightsaber of all things - and then quickly took a drag.

This was... *nice*. This place, the ship, the activities. Even the people, as strange as some of them were. It was nothing like home, and that was probably what he appreciated most about it. If he had known what life outside his Nightbrother clan was like before, he would have hopped on a shuttle off world the second he could walk. Maybe even the second he could crawl.

Meyrath chuckled at the mental image as he blew a smoke ring into the vent, which immediately sucked it up. He would have to come here more often. It was nice, peaceful, and—

—and there was someone staring at him.

His head immediately snapped to the side as he stamped out the butt of the smoke on his own leg. "Can I help you?" He called out to them.

There was no answer. This person, whoever they were, just stood there. Meyrath frowned as he took a step toward them. "You got a staring problem mate? What d'you need?"

The person continued to stare. Even squinting, it was difficult to see what lay below their hood, so Meyrath took another step closer.

Then, they took off into a dead sprint.

It was so sudden Meyrath barely had time to process that he was running too, bolting after the cloaked figure like a dog whose prey drive was just triggered. “Oi, where are you *going*?” He yelled out after them, because in all honesty he didn’t know why he was chasing them. There was just something in his gut that told him to. That, and chasing a mysterious robed figure down a ship’s corridors was far more interesting than another ‘war meeting’.

They zig-zagged through more and more hallways until the person finally entered a room which Meyrath knew had no other exit. He slowed his stride, taking a second to catch his breath before he walked over and pushed open the door. “Hey, what gi- *OOF*—”

He was cut off by something blunt slamming into his gut, and instinctively doubled over. A wave of electricity followed soon after, and his body went rigid as he dropped like a rock.

It took about a minute for Meyrath to come to his senses, blinking the darkness from his eyes as his brain processed exactly what in the Hells just happened. When his vision finally cleared, he came face-to-face with a mask, peering down intently at him from about an inch away. Immediately, he flinched and shoved himself backwards.

The masked figure just tilted their head curiously, as if studying some sort of creature. “Meyrath Rizara. Zabrak male. Cook aboard the vessel ‘*Voidbreaker II*’. Threat level... *Minimal*.” He spoke as if reading off of a dossier of some sort.

“Who’re you calling *minimal*?” Meyrath spat out. He was ignored.

“Combat abilities - unknown. Force sensitivity - unlikely. Conclusion - easy execution.”

And the masked man raised his electric weapon once again.

Meyrath quickly rolled out of the way just as the electrified baton slammed down where his head was a moment before. He sprung up and grabbed the lightsaber from his side, activating it and slashing it to the side, only for it to be stopped by the baton.

The figure tilted his head once again. “Combat abilities - prevalent. Subject has a lightsaber. Force sensitivity - likely. Threat level... *moderate*.”

Meyrath grit his teeth at the words, but his eyes were drawn to the small symbol on the side of his opponent’s weapon.

If there was one thing he picked up from all the war documents he was given, it was the pictures.

“You’re Mortis? Oh Kathka isn’t gonna believe this.”

“Kathka Togrim? Shistavanen female. Beastmaster. Threat level—”

“Ugh, *shut up and fight me!*”

Meyrath drew his lightsaber back and smashed it into the baton again. With his free hand, he activated the spring-assisted hidden blade on his wrist and wasted no time plunging it into the other man's gut. There was a faint gasp from behind his mask as he flinched, but no sooner than that came a fist to Meyrath's head that had him knocked backward nearly off his feet. He saw stars for a few moments, coming to the conclusion that this person, whoever they were, was also a Force user.

Something wet dripped down his face, and he swiped out his tongue only for it to come back with the familiar taste of iron. Meyrath sneered, and with an angered yell, he swung his saber again and again, though these attempts were thwarted by the other man's bulwark-like stance.

Then, suddenly, another figure appeared beside them and Meyrath flinched. He kicked his current opponent away and swiped his lightsaber at the newcomer, only to have it go through the air. In the split second it took for him to realize that it was an illusion, the electric baton had already been jabbed into his side again. The other man drove him back and pinned him to the wall, pushing the spiked ends of the baton further and further into Meyrath's stomach. It hadn't broken the skin yet, but he could tell he was running out of time.

With the pain though, came anger. And with anger, came resilience. It was expected that he would submit himself to the pain of the electricity coursing through his body, and for most, that would be correct.

There was one key point that this Mortis fellow seemed to be missing though. Something that wasn't on his little dossier about just who exactly he was dealing with.

He was dealing with one very pissed off Zabrak with a bad case of *rage*.

The lightsaber had fallen out of his hands in the scuffle, but that didn't stop him from grabbing on to both ends of the baton's prongs and yanking it to the side. The shock through his hands was barely noticeable, but the surprise that was undoubtedly underneath that masked face had Meyrath savoring his actions. He ripped the baton from his opponent's grasp and threw it to the side. His lightsaber returned to his hand after a brief moment of concentration, and before the other man had a chance to react, Meyrath slashed the blade upwards, across his face.

The man's mask broke in half as he stumbled backwards and collapsed to the floor. His hands immediately went to his burnt face, though judging by the sound of his pained gurgles from a cauterized throat wound, he didn't have all that much time left.

With the fight over, Meyrath's rage wore off quickly and he was left almost breathless as he stumbled towards his opponent. Kneeling down, he grabbed the man's burnt jaw and turned his face towards him.

There were probably a variety of questions he could ask at this point. Important questions, like, ‘*Who are your leaders? Where did you come from? Where did you get your intel? Why are you here?*’ Questions that could get them intel on a dangerous enemy.

Meyrath might have known to ask these things, had he been paying attention to their mission briefings and the war documents. He might have known these things if he hadn’t been playing that button game on his datapad when Kathka was telling him about the Children of Mortis’s history. He might have even known, if he had stopped to read the sticky note on Druzk’s lunch that said “*HANDS OFF MEYRATH*”.

Well, probably not. And it didn’t matter either.

No, the question that came from his mouth - the question that could hold the very fate of the brotherhood in its answer was, “what’s my threat level now, *asshat?*”