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Subject: STORY: The Scorpion's tale.

Posted by [spreegem](#) on Sat, 21 Aug 2004 02:00:40 GMT

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They stopped the truck in the washboard gully just south of the base, and geared up for the mission ahead. He was glad to be out of the grimy shirt finally, and back into his uniform. The team re-assembled to hear Valdez's instruction. He called into Nod command once more to advise their situation, and received orders to disable c-4 that may have been spread around the temple, and he also received command override codes for blast doors guarding something they were supposed to secure, and protect. It had the code name Valkyrie, and that was all he could ascertain. He also asked command about the feasibility of using the underground APC, and was advised it would take too long to tunnel from the nearest track considering the speed the front was moving at to the south. Apparently, the GDI rout was almost complete, and Nod had achieved complete surprise and chaos reigned among GDI units in the city. He thanked the commander, and turned to his men.

He unrolled a schematic of the Temple, and an outlay of the grounds surrounding it. He pointed to a Black Hand access tunnel to the underground complex. It had an access in a rock formation about one kilometer away.

"I don't know what state it's in. It was a mess at the end, and we barely made it out in time. It took three of us 72 hours to sneak out with all the GDI activity. We lost many good

Valdez drifted off in memories, and his eyes glazed over as he remembered the events of the last 12 hours inside the temple. He remembered watching a camera feed of Kane inside the temple, hands outstretched and receiving the punishing Ion energy seemingly welcoming it, as it slashed

all he could get out through gritted teeth.

The formation wasn't difficult to find. Nothing had been disturbed since valdez's exit those years ago. The explosives had been set off long ago, but they found out why soon. A bear's scattered and shattered bones were spread over the cave. They picked through the rubble, and had to move a mountain of stone to get access to the tunnel finally.

When Vigo came back to them reporting he had found nothing except dust, and critters they proceeded into the tunnel darkness. Valdez ordered a stop, and moved a fake rock panel to access a basic breaker box. He flipped a switch hoping for the best, and was greeted by intermittent lights flickering on. The ones that still functioned were dim, indicating that the emergency power supply was just about dead after years of no recharging from the main power feed. The tunnel was a clean cut rock hole in the ground, and the floor had been covered with metallic grating for traction against the water that drizzled down through the ground to make the rock slippery. Vigo was already moving down the tunnel, and Sergei could feel the dampness

increase as he followed.

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The trip down the tunnel was eventless, and quick thankfully. Valdez ordered a quick bite to eat as they came upon a platform illuminated by the barely functioning lights and the stairs leading up to the Temple ruins. They did a weapons check, and then Vigo started up the stairs and what lay beyond. He stopped when he came to large doors with the Nod emblem on them that didn't appear to have a way in. He looked over his shoulder at Valdez for an answer to the dilemma.

"They were electronically locked, and hydraulically operated. With power down, that's no

After some scouting, they finally found a duct grate about ten feet off the floor. They took his weapon for him, helped him in, and handed up the MP-5. As he was wiggling in, Valdez risked a communication with command for his status.

"Eagle one to nest; We are about to enter the temple. What's the sit rep upstairs

"We have been slowed by some unexpected mutant resistance, but will be at the site within 2

Cursing under his breath, he wiggled through the dark, grimy duct. The MP-5's light showed an access plate about ten feet in. He wiggled up to it, and gently popped the cover open not knowing what to expect. Darkness greeted him thankfully. He dropped into the room, and scanned his surroundings. He was in a storage room of sorts, and everything was coated in dust. No one had been in here in a long time. His feet left impressions in the dust as he moved towards the door in the dark. He had to use the emergency crank to get the hydraulically operated door open, and he hoped the door to the team would have the same.

He scanned to his left and right once out in the hall. Nothing moved, or made a sound. It was eerie to hear nothing except his heart beat, and breathing. This place was a tomb. He estimated the direction to find the door, and did in fact see the large door ahead. He passed an old ammo locker, and saw it hanging open as Valdez and his team had left it so long ago. He knocked on the door, and received a confirming knock in return. No crank existed on this door. He removed the access panel to the motor controlling the door, and tried to find a way to get it open. Explosive were an option, but he would prefer not to alert seismic detectors above.

The motor assembly was in good working condition, just without power. All he needed to do was get it powered somehow. Nothing presented him with an option, and he brainstormed for the answer. Suddenly it hit him. The extra ammo for the prototypes. He pulled a square box high energy power supply for the laser rifle from his upper vest pocket, and looked for the pole connections. He then clipped the wires that used to be hard wired to the generators, and connected the negative, then touched the positive lead to the wire. To his satisfaction, the motor started turning in its idle mode, awaiting instruction. Above him, the panel cycled red to green as the team on the other side pushed the now live access panel.

The pump took the strain of opening the door and it took a second before enough hydraulic

pressure had been built up to pop the door open. It slowly creaked open on the dirt covered tracks, and squealed as it hit resistance and rust. The power cell was losing energy fast, but the door was open enough for the team. As they passed through, Valdez looked at him, handed him his weapon, and said:

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He had Valdez stop ahead at the intersection of hallways. "Alright, straight ahead is the way into the rest of the temple. Whatever you see out here, is classified secret, Black Hand level 1. You deny ever seeing it, and if you ever tell anyone, you will die painfully and slowly. These are

This door had a crank, and Drubnov was tapped to slowly open it as Valdez peered through to see what the threat level was. He wasn't ready for what he saw. The temple he remembered was a pristine, and beautiful place full of stained glass, columns, and rows of mahogany carved benches on a crimson carpet facing the altar, and the screens that relayed information during services. He remembered how the vaulted ceiling was so beautiful, and allowed the sunlight to come in during evening services through the red tinted glass. The front doors had been massive creations of gilded metal work and red stained glass with scenes from the brotherhood history in them. The onyx pillars holding up the roof had held golden chalices, and candles and incense had created a lovely smell of burnt cedar. This was his home in the old days, and he longed to be here once again.

But not this way. The Ion cannon had torn the building in two from its entrance to the altar, and a jagged rip now existed where the fine mahogany benches had once been. The benches had long ago been consumed in the fires after the strike, and the red carpet with Nod logos was all but a tattered remnant now. The golden chalices had all been removed by enterprising young GDI soldiers, and the screen above the altar where he had watched so many sermons projected were now burnt, and askew. The whole assembly had crashed down onto the altar, and ruined the fine marble.

The roof had been rent open and he could see jagged red glass and then the sky beyond as the storm moved away. The sun peeked through a cloud briefly, and hit a remaining red glass pane flashing him back to the old days, and a tear came to his eye.

He grimaced, and wiped it away, as the soldier in him came back to the surface. Kane lived, and they would rebuild this temple to its former glory. His friends would be avenged. He saw GDI had placed a conveyor in the center of the gaping hole, and had been removing artifacts from the temple for a long time. Currently, they were stripping it as fast as possible ahead of the advancing forces of Nod. The EVA link announced over loudspeakers: "Attention. All GDI personnel report to the evacuation area. Brotherhood of Nod forces approaching. Estimated Time of Arrival is one hour, thirty minutes. Orca transports inbound on vector 213. All personnel evacuate immediately. Brotherhood of Nod air units inbound at this time. Time until temple destruction, 10

They went through the door, and started firing at any GDI left in the area as they scrambled to get into the transports now landing. Sergei zoomed in on a technician attempting to finish wiring the fire box for the charges. They had caught GDI just in time. Ten minutes later, and the place would

be smoking rubble. He fired, and the technician slumped to the ground. A running firefight now consumed the upper level of the temple, and GDI soldiers tried to evacuate to the waiting Transports. With no time to load the remaining artifacts now that they were under fire, they ran straight for the transports, and attempted liftoff.

Three of them succeeded, but Becker's heavy Laser, and three other lights sliced into the fans of a fourth, and brought it crashing down. The Titans in its hold crashed through the side of the transport as it tilted before crashing, and the ground trembled as they hit, and smashed to pieces. The transport crashed down on top of them in flaming wreckage. The temple belonged to Nod once again.

Valdez called command to let them know the Temple was secure, and he was going to check on a hidden door in the rear of the altar. He left Sanchez in charge of finding the c-4, and disarming it, and they bolted down the stairs behind the altar.

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It became clear quickly that someone had already been here. The door at the end of the hall opened, and they saw that the room beyond was disturbed. They entered carefully, and looked around. The room was a computing center with wires running to a central chamber. Everything was still functioning but the chamber was empty and the lights were already on. Valdez growled under his breath, and queried the computer as to how long ago the chamber had been violated. 4 minutes, 13 seconds was the text reply. He seemed shocked, and started looking around for evidence of where they had gone. Disturbances in the dust showed they had gone out the door across the room.

He motioned the other two to follow, and Valdez took point himself. He burst into the other room which was full of destroyed artifacts, and across it towards the ramp up to the surface. Sergei looked behind him, and the wall they had just come through appeared solid again. Holographic projection maybe? The other two followed not knowing what to expect, and they proceeded up into the labs. It was here that they caught their first glimpse of the culprits.

Mutants.

Valdez laid down a nasty barrage of laser fire, and caught it in the back. The others with it, ran for it, and laid down cover fire as they backed out. Valdez alerted the guys upstairs, and had them try to squeeze them from above, but the mutants knew this place well. They must have been searching for this thing a while under GDI's noses. They took a little known route through the experimentation labs, and came out in a kitchen under fire all the way by Valdez in his fury. Another mutant died by Valdez's rifle, and he leaped over the body in his raging pursuit. He burst through the door the mutants had gone through, and was met with small arms fire pelting his position, and body armor. It was no match of course, but served to knock him off his feet. The other two burst through the door in time to see a civilian truck careen out of the lot, and into the hills. They emptied their entire clips into the rear of the vehicle, and managed to get one more, but the vehicle got away, and Valdez screamed curses at the sky.

"When they got back to him from dragging the body back to the temple, Valdez was just getting his composure back, after destroying the kitchen in his fury. He looked at them with

They didn't know what he meant, but after a search of the body, they confirmed he had nothing but body odor and a massive crystalline poisoning of his body from the Tiberium.

Valdez got on the radio, and said: "Nest, this is Eagle one. Mutants have stolen the

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