

The merchant hit the wall without much noise. Just a dull-ish thud really. After your ribs have been fractured in multiple places it's hard to breath in very much. Without air, a much needed component, well yelling or screaming were just out of the question. No matter how much you wanted to do it. He reached in his coat and tossed a worn satchel to the ground.

Three figures stood over him. All three dirty. All three cocky. And at least one armored up with stolen military tech.

The leader put his right hand up to his goggles. "TAG says hes gone from a 74 to a 91." Ren muttered. "Cray get his money bag and lets go."

Cray, the youngest, was wiry and almost always twitching. Drove Ren nuts sometimes. But Cray did what ever Ren told him to so it was a price the young leader was willing to pay. For now.

Cray shouldered his way past Dallon the third member of the malicious trio. Dallon was the heavy muscle. Ren had wondered back in the old days, What 2 months ago, who would have won if he and Dallon had ever fought. Now he knew the answer to that. He thought back to when he'd discovered the wreckage out in the forest that day when he'd gone with his Mom over to his aunts.

Ren hated "Family" things but was glad he'd went on this

one. Walking around to keep from passing out from boredom he'd found the ship about half covered in the brush. It looked like one of those newer hover cars. Ren hadn't seen anything like it. He started going through the wreck to see if anything valuable had gotten left behind. He opened small door behind the seat and found the glasses. He hadn't seen anything like them either. He'd put them on thinking they were sun glasses which they weren't. They were so dark he couldn't see a thing through them. Stupid glasses. He thought it'd be funny if he gave them to Cray as a joke.

Ren had stuck them in his pocket and forgotten about them until 2 maybe 3 days later. He'd walked up on some guys doing some sort of deal and one had dropped a wad of money. Ren, ever the opportunist grabbed the wad and ran. He'd heard one of the guys cussing but Ren didn't stop to listen. After he'd ran a few blocks and he turned down an ally and ducked behind a dumpster. He put the glasses on as a quick disguise. When he'd done that his finger must have touched an activator or something on them because the glasses came to life. Everything he looked at was sharp and as clear as he had ever seen anything! Like if he focused he could zoom in on things half a block away. That was cool, but cooler still was what he'd discovered when the dealer he'd stolen the money from stuck his head into the ally where he was hiding. Red numbers popped up in his eyes. 00% in the left

and 33% in the right. Another, larger guy came into the ally. When Ren looked at him the number in his right eye changed to 21%. From where he was hiding he could hear them talking softly.

"I don't think he's here boss. He would have ran again when we got this close if he'd a stopped." The larger of the two stopped peering down the ally and reached down and picked up some pipe laying on the ground. His number changed to 14%.

"OK, Boomer, you're probably right. Damn though! Practically a whole nights take just up and gone. Come on, lets go look in the party district. If I had that kind of found money I'd be using it. And get rid of that." He gestured to the mans hands, "Guns are better than pipes." He pulled his light jacket open to reveal not 1 but 2 guns. At least 2 because that's all Ren could see. He might have more. His number dropped from 33% to 6%.

"Ha, good one boss. Your right." The large man tossed away the pipe and the number changed again. Back to 21%. He turned back to the leader but his number stayed at 6%.

The glasses. They were telling him how much of a chance he had against people in a fight. As the glasses saw weapons it changed the percentage. It was communicating in real time based

on what he saw. This was great! After leaving the ally Ren had worn them around all night. wondering at first if these things really worked. Sometimes he got green numbers. Those were always higher than 50% He'd seen one older man that registered an 93%. Ren had just jumped out of the shadows at him and yelled "Give me your stuff." Which, the guy had! He had brought in Cray and Dallon a couple weeks back so they could ambush bigger prey. When Ren looked at Dallon it had read 54%. So Ren could take Dallon he thought haughtily. According to the glasses not by much but any was enough. Everything had been going great since then. Except one thing...

"Hey Ren." Cray cackled, "Can I wear the glasses? You promised you'd think about it."

Ren hadn't looked up. This was that one thing, Cray wouldn't shut up about wearing the glasses. Ren gave him the answer he always had. "No."

It was actually Dallon who spoke up this time. "You know Ren you did kinda promise you'd let both of us check them out. It ain't like either of us would try and take em'."

Ren took a deep breath, knowledge was power he thought. He knew the most about these things but. Ren smiled, if he let the

other 2 wear them just for a minute they'd both know that Ren was the baddest of the 3. Yeah they should know that. "OK."

Cray almost squealed like a girl in excitement. "Awesome Ren! Give'em to me!"

Ren handed them to Cray and stepped back. "Ren these things are broken. I can't see anything."

Ren smacked Dallon on the arm and laughed, "Of course you can't figure out how to turn them on." He turned to Dallon and smiled knowingly. "It's easy, just take your right hand and push the buttons on the top and bottom of the frame at the same time. That turns them on."

Cray awkwardly did as instructed and within seconds, "Wow! This is bad ass! Dallon it says your a 17%." Cray pushed the glasses up off his eyes briefly and looked at Ren. "Is that good?"

Ren actually was enjoying this. "Well it's good for Dallon. It means if you got into a fight with him the glasses are saying you have a 17% chance to win."

Cray looked a little disappointed. "Well Dallon is a

beast." The slender man slid them back over his eyes. "Damn. So are you Ren, you're 14%."

Ren looked at Dallon, he looked a little disappointed also. Ren knew that Dallon had wondered the same thing that he had. If they'd ever gotten into a fight who would have won. Ren smirked at Dallon. "Let that be a word to the wise Dallon. The glasses don't lie they..."

"Ah Ren?" Cray interrupted. Cray never interrupted. "I really think these glasses are broken."

Now Ren was getting angry. "They were fine a second ago. You better not have broken them."

Cray fidgeted uneasily. "Well I didn't push anything or touch anything." He shook his head, "When I look back at you now it's working. Maybe the battery is going out."

Ren put his hands on his hips. "Now why would you think a thing like that in that almost doesn't function brain of yours?"

Cray looked back down the ally then back at Ren. Finally Cray pointed. As Ren and Dallon turned to follow what Cray was pointing at Cray spoke up. "Because when I look at the guy at

the end of the ally it shows me negative 23."

A man, tall but athletic wearing a long cloak had appeared seemingly from nowhere. He'd surprised the trio somehow. Ren hadn't heard him walk up or anything.

"Ren," Cray started again still staring at the newcomer. "They say -111% in red on both sides!. What does that mean?"

"What that means, boy," The strangers tone was deep and menacing as he pulled the hood of his cloak off from over his head, "is that the goggles are smarter than you are." He turned to face Ren. "What was it you just said, glasses don't lie?" The man laughed and fixed Ren with those pale glowing blue eyes. He lowered his head slightly. "And what they're telling you now thief is that it's time to pay for taking something that doesn't belong to you."

Boy? Ren thought. That pissed him off. So OK, this did look like the kind of man who would own a pair of, what had he called them? Goggles? Still, no one called Ren "Boy" and got away with it.

Ren took an angry step toward the man and reached for his knife at the same time. "Look I don't give a f-ing rats ass who

you think you are." He took more steps in the mans direction and caught sight of Dallon doing the same out of the corner of his eye. "You are about to find out who you ain't."

Then everything happened at once. Ren charged the final few steps bringing his blade from behind him in an arc. It never reached the target. The man easily stepped inside the move. A lightning fast, heavy elbow strike to Ren's forehead left him unconscious and probably with a concussion. Dallon a step further away had managed to get his knife in front of him. Didn't matter. In seemingly the same motion the stranger kept spinning and his left foot hit Dallon in the side of the jaw it was like his head just blew up.

Then the man was nose to nose with the terrified Cray. The man didn't waste a blow on him. He simply reached over with his right hand and flipped the goggles off Crays face like picking up a child's toy.

He held them about a foot from his face. His eyes never leaving Cray. "Tactical Threat Assessment Goggles. T.T.A.G. Stolen military technology. Stolen by this little band of boys." He put the goggles on his face. It just looked like they belonged there. He pulled his cloak up and turned to leave.

Cray, who had pissed himself at some point during the 4



second fight or at some point shortly after couldn't help himself."So you are military. No wonder the glasses had me at a negative 111% chance of winning the fight."

The man stopped and turned back toward Cray. "Where I'm from the numbers 111 are the ones you call when there's a body to picked up. The goggles don't give you your chance of winning a fight. They're displaying your chance to survive." He looked at the two unconscious on the ground. "Lucky for you I'm in a good mood." The man turned and disappeared out of the ally.

