**There Are No Traitors Here**

**13820 - Kenath Zoron**

Zoron's office door alarm buzzed, waking him from the snooze he'd been having. He lifted his head and peeled a sheaf of paper from the side of his face. His workload had picked up in the last few weeks, with his recent promotion to Aedile as well as his appointment as Magistrate to the Deputy Grand Master. With that, he'd been spending more and more time slaving away at his desk instead of being home sleeping and spending time with his family.

A glance at the security monitor showed that it was a lone figure and his senses confirmed that. The creature at the door looked like a medium-sized shrub, but didn't appear to be all that powerful either, so he felt secure in disengaging the hidden security measures and punching the unlock code into his console at his desk.

The door slid open smoothly and Zoron watched the tree-thing enter. To his confusion and dismay, three more figures came through the door as well. The four figures spread out in small room and he saw lightsabers dangling from each person's hip. He was furious at himself for his lax safety procedures and tried to shake off his sleepiness, but a haze lingered in his mind regardless of his efforts.

*Someone's messing with me. Should have seen that. Oh well, I'll dig it out of their dead bodies later.*

Zoron drew his pistol and shot the closest figure - a female - point-blank in the chest. They must not have expected him to be armed in that manner as she barely flinched before the bolt ripped through her. She dropped like a rock as Zoron turned his blaster to the next figure, but their saber was already swinging through the air and his gun spun apart in different directions.

The tree-thing at the door punched through the air towards Zoron and he was thrown backwards out of his chair and into the wall. His head cracked against the durasteel and his senses were further dulled as he slid to the floor in a daze. He fumbled for his lightsaber, but his hands didn't seem to want to move where he was trying to make them. The man who had cut his blaster took a long stride in towards him and drove his knee into the side of Zoron's head. An explosion of pain cut through his senses and his vision went dim. He felt the man wrench his lightsaber from his belt and then he was lifted bodily into the air. He hung limply and heard the strange tree-thing at the door giving orders.

"Leave her. She was expendable but her death may still serve our cause. Put her in his chair and burn the room. The body might fool them long enough for us to further our escape."

Zoron tried to concentrate enough to send a warning to Pravus, but the tree-thing at the door sensed it before he could finish gathering the Force.

"Oh. None of that." The tree-thing reached out with a branch and punched him out cold.

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Zoron woke with a start as he felt the cold splash of water on his face.

"Hello again. Nice of you to join us. We have some questions for you." It was the tree-thing who'd been at the door of his office. He was obviously the leader of the group and certainly packed a significant amount of Force ability. He must have hidden it when he approached the door. He probably also was the one who cloaked his compatriots from Zoron for that brief moment before the door unlocked.

Zoron struggled to open his mouth but managed to fumble out a string of semi-coherent words. "Who you are? Why?"

The tree-thing leaned back in the chair across from Zoron. "You don't know me? Insulting. I am Ood Bnar. I think you know why already. You've been looking a little too closely at my master."

Realization dawned on Zoron's face. His master, Darth Pravus, had tasked him with ferreting out the traitor in the Dark Council. Apparently his work had hit too close for comfort. At least this confirmed his suspicions - the Headmaster had been working for the One Sith. Apparently Dacien's assistants were in on the treachery as well. He hadn't made the obvious connection in his sleepy state earlier, but there were only so many Neti in the galaxy, and even fewer who were in the Brotherhood.

"Now you recognize me? I see you do. Too late to help you though."

Zoron glanced around the small, dark room and realized that he recognized the faces of the other two human males in the room. *Meleu... something and... Farrin whosamacallit.* It made sense. The three persons closest to Dacien would obviously be the ones tasked to deal with anyone searching for the leak.

Zoron coughed and spat out a mouthful of copper-flavoured spit. "So, what can you hope to learn here? You know that Pravus already has access to my research and you must know that I've talked with him about my suspicions."

"Learn? I need to learn nothing. I need to make you hurt. It doesn't matter if that fool Pravus knows about our plans. By the time he finds your body and looks closely at your research it'll be too late to do anything. Well, too late to do anything except mourn." The other men in the room chuckled at that.

Zoron felt a cold bead of sweat roll down his back and he shivered. Nevertheless, he wanted to keep his dignity in the face of inevitable death. He straightened his back and looked the Neti in the eye. "What about the girl?"

"Her? Some acolyte I convinced to come along to help us with a 'traitor'. If you hadn't killed her, I would have. I needed a body to throw your clanmates and master off the trail for a short while. Now. Enough talk. Time for you to..."

He didn't get to finish his sentence as the durasteel sheets on either side of the room peeled back with a hideous screeching sound. Shadows stretched into the room from armoured figures standing in each hole. A masked man in black and gold armour stepped forward and ignited both of his lightsabers. A ghastly glow came from the black blade that was starkly contrasted by the golden blade in the other hand. He spoke clearly as he pointed the gold blade at the Neti, then each human male in turn.

"Ood Bnar. Meleu Karthdo. Farrin Xies. You are accused of treason against the Brotherhood. You will come with me now or you will die."

The Neti looked around at the men in the new entrances to the room. Zoron took the opportunity to do the same. Pravus was obvious, as no one in the Brotherhood could mistake the gold and black sabers. Another massive man stood beside Pravus in black and orange armour with a matching orange saber. Zoron recognized him as Montresor.

On the other side of the room was Halcyon Rokir in his green and black robes. Keirdagh Cantor was standing in his red armour. Finally, Rian Aslar was in his custom blue battle armour. Zoron noticed a handful of heavily armoured figures behind each group as well. He guess these were some of Taldryan's Darkfire troopers or some of the Dark Council's own special forces.

The Neti appeared to make up his mind. "I served my master with honour. Your puny Brotherhood will fall." He brought his saber up to strike at Zoron, but he never landed the blow. He was hit by so many saber strikes that his body looked like so much firewood when he fell. The other two tried to fight back, but they were so massively outmatched that it only took seconds for the fight to end.

Montresor walked to Zoron and undid his bindings. He helped him to his feet before a medic came into the room from the troopers outside. While he was being checked over, Pravus removed his helmet and nodded to Zoron.

"Excellent work drawing them into the open. Right according to plan."

Zoron stopped the medic and looked back at his master. "I'm sorry, what?"

"Oh, didn't I tell you? You were the bait to draw the traitor out. Apparently your clan superiors forgot to pass that message on. We were waiting for this to happen and had a tracker implanted in you one night while you slept. We know there are no traitors here anymore."

Zoron glared at Halcyon, Rian, and Keirdagh. Halcyon looked at Keirdagh, who shook his head. Keirdagh then looked at Rian who also shook his head. After a moment, Rian looked at Zoron.

"Um. We told Howie to tell you."