

### ***A Traitor Defined***

"You have to find out who the cause is so that they can be eliminated as soon as possible," said Andrelious Mimosa-Inahj. The holoprojector displayed the image of the hardened Sith, in red, crackling and fizzing on occasion.

"Spy on the Council? Have you gone mad? How do you even know about this?" Achilles asked his former master. "Should not the entire Brotherhood be put on the matter?"

"No." Andrelious had always been quite stern. "We were told that Arconan radars detected an incoming array of heavy missiles out of the surrounding area. Later, our scanners picked up foreign aircraft attempting to land. A band of scouts were sent out, only to discover a militarized outpost of Trandoshan pirates." Andrelious pressed onto his datapad, and immediately the images of the settlement showed up on the screen in front of the small chamber.

"They don't look like they are going away anytime soon," Achilles stated.

"Exactly. That is why we need to take care of this matter before it grows into a larger threat." Andrelious took a sip of tea before continuing. "We need this done discreetly. If the brotherhood knows that there is a traitor within the council, this campaign will take forever and we will waste much of our resources on small skirmishes."

"How do we know that the threat is in the council?" Inquired the young Jedi Knight. "It could be some of the delusional lightsiders that we tug along with us. You know they have it out for us."

"The scouts were able to intercept communications between the Trandoshans and another entity. It was encrypted. While we do not know what was said between the two, we have pinpointed the signal's sending location to the command post that is being used by the council," stated the Sith. "Right after the transmission was ended, the Trandoshans began mobilizing a military force."

"But this is an investigative mission," replied the young Zabrak. "Shouldn't Shadow Gate be on this one?"

"Shadow Gate has had it's hands tied for months." The ex-Imperial had experienced war and new the costs of it. The dark knight that stood before him had fought valiantly in many battles, but had nowhere near the knowledge of his former master. "Besides," started Andrelious, "you made

your way through the extensive training of both regimen Alpha and Bravo when I led you in Shadow Gate. This should be common ground for you."

"I'll do what I must," said Achilles before a bow of respect to his former master, who did the same. "Have a capture and interrogation squad prepared and meet me at rendezvous point X. I'm going to need them."

"I'll lead the squad myself," replied Inahj. "You just find the leak. Let me remind you that this information is only known by a few in Arcona, and it needs to stay that way. Your return to the Brotherhood will be marked by either the success or defeat of this assignment. Let us see if you can live up to your new name."

With that, the hologram flickered off, and the knight made his way to his shuttle.

Penetrating the command post without being sighted was no easy task. The squad, consisting of Andrelious, Achilles, Draith Dreadsoul, Saskia Ortega and 3 standard Aconan troopers were forced to adhere themselves to the shadows in contradiction to the nature of Soulfire.

"If we are spotted spying on the Council, we will be tried for treason," said Saskia Ortega. "So why are we letting the rookie take the lead?" she asked, gesturing towards Achilles.

"Because he has been MIA for a long time," responded the Sith. "It is time for him to re-establish himself among the ranks of the Brotherhood. Achilles is more than capable of leading this mission. After all, I'm the one that taught him," said Andrelious, giving an extremely rare smile to his former apprentice. The Sergeant, though hesitantly, nodded, and the team continued on their way.

The Arconans were steady on their way when they heard a voice behind them.

"What are you doing in here?" The voice was familiar.

"Valhavoc." Achilles turned around to see a hooded, bearded man staring him down. "Good to see you again."

"Cend?" The Sith Warlord's face took upon itself a look of awe. "I thought you died on Krayiss III!"

"Incendus did die on Krayiss II," the Zabrak said with a smirk. "I am Achilles now."

"What's the difference?" asked Valhavoc with a smile. "So why are you sneaking around here? I would have taken you on the spot, but I know Andrelious wouldn't come here without reason."

"You're correct in assuming that," said Andrelious. "However, we cannot disclose that information to you."

"If you can't tell me why you are here, then I am forced to think that it is for no good reason." Valhavoc's tone had shifted almost immediately.

"Alright Val, if you must know, we are on an investigative mission," responded the pilot.

"Looking for the traitor as well, eh?" replied Valhavoc, much to the surprise of the team.

"How did you know that?" asked Draith, his reptilian eyes surveying the FIST of the Brotherhood, His claws clenching his saber.

"I want that to be true, because if it's not, all of you have to die, and I don't want that for you," said Valhavoc. "Listen, the rest of the Council does not know of this threat, only I, Muz Ashen, and apparently you. Dacien is the perpetrator.

"How do we know you aren't the perpetrator?" blurted Saskia. "He could be setting us up for treason, Andrelious."

"I have a holo-recording of him meeting a captain of that Trandosha settlement in secret." Valhavoc proceeded to pull out a small holoprojector. With a flick of a button, two figures were displayed, one a mysterious cloaked man, the other a short but built reptile. The Trandosha began to speak, and the two engaged in the formal commodities before the group heard something that really stuck out to them:

"Have your men bomb at o-five hundred tomorrow."

"Yes, my lord." The Trandosha took a knee. "This brotherhood will be shattered with the combined might of our forces and that of the One Sith." With that Valhavoc powered the projector off.

"O-five hundred? That's in eight hours!" exclaimed Achilleus. "How do we call off this attack?"

"That hologram showed know ssssignssss of tampering. We will have to deal with Dacien and ssssend them a messsage," hissed Draith. "It iss a shame that some of my people fail to realisse their boundariesss."

"First, we need to know what to expect," said Saskia. "We don't know their numbers or the specifics of the attack. This could cripple our footing on Nicht Ka."

"Saskia is right. However, it would be foolish to confront Dacien head on," said Andrelious. "We need another way if getting our information."

"His magistrate, Farrin Xies, is currently in my custody," replied Valhavoc. "He is a cunning assassin, but no match for me. Right this way," he said, gesturing towards a dim corridor. Andrelious and Achilles nodded at each other, and the group followed.

"I can't tell you anything though!" exclaimed Farrin Xies from behind the plasma cell. "This is completely ridiculous!"

"We know something is going on, Farrin," stated Achilles. "We have holographic proof that the headmaster is the perpetrator."

"We need you to tell us what is going on," added Andrelious. "If you don't comply, you will suffer," said Andrelious, coldly, the power of his gaze being unleashed upon Farrin.

"But I swear it, there is nothing to be said!" replied the knight, the pure anger of his being projected in every syllable, in every word, of every sentence that he uttered in defense. "This is an outrage!"

"The entire Brotherhood is at stake, Farrin," stated the emotionless Valhavoc. "Please cooperate."

"Look, it isn't possible that the man in that hologram is Dacien," replied the magistrate, this time coolly.

"And why issss that?" inquired Draith.

"Because Dacien is a tried and true loyal soldier to the Brotherhood," said Farrin, passion now shown in his words. "He has even told me of his plans to make the Brotherhood more knowledgeable by implementing a new testing system."

"Really?" asked Achilles, a sparkle of curiosity swelling in his eyes. Suddenly, it all clicked. "Farrin, have you noticed anything...off, about Dacien lately?"

"Well," started the bearded Sith, "A few days after we discussed his new system, he did begin doing some strange things I guess. I swear that sometimes I see him with fur all covering his body, but when I blink, he looks as normal as ever. He also grunts a little bit more, smells like wet dog after returning from the showers, and pronounces "Sith" as "Shith."

*It's that Bothan Shapeshifter again.* Achilles' thoughts were filled with those of Krayiss II. He paused for a moment before turning to his former master.

"Andrelious, have you heard of the Bothan spies?"

"Of course," replied the Sith Warlord. "They assisted the Rebellion in the fight against the Empire."

"Not *all* of them," said Achilles. "Have you heard of the equipment that they implement, allowing them morphing capabilities?"

"I cannot say I have," replied Andrelious.

Achilleus looked at him, looked at Farrin, and then turned to the rest of his team.

"My fellow warriors, the Brotherhood has been infiltrated. As of this moment, trust nobody."