

Making Due

A conglomeration of displays and wires hung to the bland gray walls of the former storage room in the heart of the *Lancer*-class frigate, while the heat from the collection of computer equipment necessary to run the office hummed away drowning out the creaks and moans of the heavily damaged capital ship. The *Maelstrom* had mostly survived the Civil War, and was now a name befitting of the temporary office of the Master-at-Arms. The former spacious and efficiently optimized space deep below the Dark Hall used for years prior was in an unknown condition below the surface of Antei. For now, this would have to do.

Evant Taelyan, Praetor to the Master-at-Arms, took a sip of his caf before setting back down on one of only a few clear spaces on the entire workspace before him. The hot caffeinated liquid a boon to his mind, but a curse on his body as he reached up and wiped a bead of sweat that ran down his brow. The heat was stifling as the countless fans kept the electronics at a safe operating temperature.

He wondered for a moment why he had to put up with it in the icy cold vacuum of space but plugged away at his work. Elsewhere the Magistrates on staff worked from the comforts of their Clan's headquarters processing requests, but he had the privilege of setting up a redundant link to the Dark Jedi Brotherhood network so work could continue. Work that had to be done in person.

Beep. Beep. Beep.

Evant reached out and pressed the pulsing red light on a nearby datapad. "What can I do for you my Lord?"

"How far along are you on the mobile Master-at-Arms office?" The Master-at-Arms, Aabsdu di Plagia Dupar's voice echoed around the small room.

"Damage to this ship was more extensive than we thought, so longer term repairs will be needed but it will do for now. Have nearly all connections to the mainframe established. Just waiting on the Seneschal to make the final link for full access," Evant answered, trying to mask the exhaustion in his tone.

"Excellent. See to it that it's done within the day, I want you to meet up with me and the rest of the fleet tomorrow."

"Of course, my Lord."

“Also, I can’t get ahold of Howlader, and the Magistrates are busy on other affairs. See to it that you contact Marick Arcona regarding several pending promotions. I trust you will see to it they are handled.”

“Yes, of course.”

Click.

Again the hum of the fans became the only sound droning on in his head. Evant reached out and reluctantly took another sip of his caf. A heavy sigh as he reached out and picked up a datapad from the table and scrolled through the contact list looking for the Consul of Arcona. He cracked a smile as the grim expression of the youthful looking Consul filled the display. His consistently serious demeanor, made it easier to imagine that perhaps the topic at hand had nothing at all to do with his mood.

A few button pushes later and the call was connected.

“Finally. I don’t like to keep Arconans waiting,” Marick said, skipping any formal greeting.

“Nice to see you too Marick, I hope you’re doing well,” Evant stated sarcastically.

“I’m not well. I have two promotions waiting on your office and I have no idea why. I expect you’ve called with some excuse?” Marick added a bit of venom to his tone.

“I’ve looked them over. Well, besides the obvious delays from our offices being destroyed by the Final Way, you’ve added a bit too much personal flair to the recommendations and so it’s pending review,” Evant explained, hoping the response would placate the Dark Side Adept.

“Personal flair? Are you serious?” Marick spat back.

“Well-”

“It wasn’t a question. Just tell me what line is causing the problem and I’ll remove it,” Marick responded quickly, interrupting Evant. “I won’t have my members denied their hard earned rewards for a single well meaning line.

“Of course. I’ll see to it a response is in your inbox immediately,” Evant responded with a heavy sigh, glad the call was going better than expected.

“See to it,” Marick responded as he hung up the call.

“Bye Marick Arconae,” Evant said to noone in particular since the call had ended prematurely.

Reaching up the Praetor gulped the rest of his lukewarm caf and set the empty cup on the table. His free hand rapidly swiping and tapping away at the datapad still in his hand as he formulated a response to the Consul of Arcona. Highlighting strange turns of phrase and sarcastic wording that was keeping his recommendation from moving through the system. As he pressed send, one more thing was behind him.

A burning smell of plastic and fuel reminded him that there were too many things to count ahead of him. A clicking sound somewhere deep in the walls of the ship joined the droning hum as the whole place shook following what he could only assume was a small explosion. Small only because the whole ship hadn't ripped apart, it had sounded much worse.

Tripping his cup of caf to the side, Evant peered inside with a frown at the emptiness of it. His eyes scanned a few indicators on a display hastily bolted into the durasteel wall of the room hanging above him. So many unresponded to inquiries following the Civil War. It was all over, and now they all needed to be awarded for it.

Rapid tapping at the datapad in his hands brought up a picture of a panda.

Click.

"I'll be right back Yacks, the boy is calling me and it might be important," a recognizable voice blared from the datapad, on display was just the ceiling of some unidentified room, slowly adjusting to the strong jaw line and beedy eyes of Howlader Taldrya. "This is important right?"

"I mean, I think so. There are a lot of requests coming in now that the Civil War has concluded. Could use your help here," Evant pleaded, knowing it was futile but going through the motions anyways.

"I have a scale of importance Evant. I'm not even entirely sure it overlaps with yours anywhere," Howlader responded, shaking his head. "If I find time I'll do something."

"Right, well that's all I can hope for I suppose," Evant replied, the call was disconnected before he could finish.

For a moment Evant just mindlessly tapped away at his datapad. Ignoring the sounds and smells that assaulted his senses for a brief moment. Not processing anything and just taking it all in. Flagrant typos, incorrect word usage, over-awarding, under-awarding, blatant disregard for regulation all filled the work queue.

"My Lord, do you need a refresher on that caf?" a calm voice spoke from the entryway to the makeshift office.

"Of course," Evant immediately responded, gesturing to his cup.

One of the crew of the ship came and refilled the cup. Just the smell of it calmed the nerves of the Sith. The thick black liquid slowly rippling as it poured. The energy being lost into the cup around it as it filled up. Then still as glass. A sign the ship itself was in a rare moment of calm as it was put back together.

Evant waited until the crew member left, when he was alone again, and just laughed. His eyes fell back to his datapad and began to click away. One by one putting things behind him.