

The Great Ploy of '39.

As a presumed loyal Inquisitor, you have been selected to track down and identify the supposed traitor(s) within our ranks, and deal with them accordingly.

Jeremon Tusk. An arguably impressive individual, but a little lucky. After trawling through 15 other people's data, Tusk's was the first that really caught his eye. His resume had many impressive qualities, but he seemed to elevate through his society and community much quicker than necessary. At each hurdle, he would be selected for promotion, or for leadership. Perhaps he had a spectacular personality, and charm, that won him the positions.

But that doesn't condemn him as a traitor.

Seridan searched for more dirt on Tusk. Within Arcona, he'd taken part in quite a few campaigns, all of which mentioned his name. His name always appeared in the section where many notable members were put. Quite a long list, which didn't seem to single him out as being extraordinarily unique, or successful. *There*. One incident reported on New Tython during invasion of O'reenians: Tusk made a choice. He chose to help a group of farmers recover and rebuild, and aided them, when other members argued that they leave their healer with the village and pursue the now-inferior task force, as per their orders. Tusk refused their counsel and forced his squad to help. It cost the team 4 hours 26 minutes. Despite the victory against the O'reenians, this unlawful following of orders was flagged and documented. A note from his superior, General Kosinegg, states that he was 'let off as he is mostly an impeccable member.' No other mention of this event anywhere, despite it being a serious offence, it seems to have been covered up. Evidence of altruism, disobeying orders, and of a cover-up.

Seridan opened another console window, and opened the Inquisitorius VPN uplink application. He entered his login, and scanned his thumbprint. Navigating to the Agent database, he noticed that the connection seemed slightly slower than usual; connection via VPN from this terminal usually was near-instantaneous. Today, it was slightly lagging.

Analysis of the INQ database yielded yet more information on young Tusk. Came from a family of Intelligence officers. Two Uncles either imprisoned or killed due to being double agents. Father working for First Order. Tusk left family aged 15 — later than some, but early enough to have been taught much already. Studies had shown that most of a person's personality and worldview was determined before age 14. Tusk had consistently been described as 'isolated', 'luke-warm', and 'odd-tempered'. Not only does this confuse the idea that it was his charm that gained him the promotions, but also it correlates with the stress levels expected of a internally-conflicted person. Such as a double-agent.

On missions for INQ, Tusk had always performed adequately, never excelling too much, nor neglecting the job. An unusual note on his agent profile was the sole recommendation that he was 'Very discrete and professional.' According to Arcona archives, Tusk has not received any

Intel training other than Noviciate level. This suggests that he has received prior training to a high level — such as from his family, of skilled and professional Intel officers.

Seridan sat back in his chair, mind racing as he concluded. Speaking out loud, he hypothesised, “Tusk has succeeded in receiving promotion after promotion, despite not being mentioned for honours in field reports, nor receiving any sort of praise. He is an insular character, with no known close friends to speak of. He has the temperament of a conflicted person, and received the majority of his Intel training from his family, who are known double-agents. He tries his hardest not to be noticed, and yet he tries to elevate his status, presumably to access high-level intel. This can be said for his actions within INQ, and within Arcona. He has also showed signs of disobedience and gross negligence of orders, at the expense of allied civilians. Tusk, if not one of our traitors, is certainly disreputable. Let’s find him.”

Making up his mind, Seridan used his High Inquisitor status to put an alert on Tusk, meaning that if any information changed, he would know. He closed the INQ interface and shut down his workstation. Grabbing his INQ cowl and scanner, he made off to find Tusk.

A datapad logged in by Tusk was located in the room just ahead. Seridan had hid his INQ gear in a thick brown cloak, and adjusted his neckline before entering. There was a lone person in the room, and it was not Tusk.

As he entered, the figure stood. His armour glinted as he rose to two metres tall. A pale green light pulsed from his chest.

Seridan pulled back his hood and relinquished his hold on the hilt of his saber. “Solari?”

The hulking droid host of the Shard turned with great agility, mimicking surprise. His metal vocoder started whirring, “Seridan? Oh, I was expecting someone else.”

“Tusk?”

“What? Oh, no. Tusk was a persona I embedded in various systems to draw out rogue Inquisitors. Tusk was so obviously dodgy that I thought that any traitors would leap at Tusk to avoid being in the limelight.”

“Well, seems you got me, eh? He was only obvious, though, if you dug deep enough.”

“I designed it so that only those with the required skills of a double-agent would find him. Plus, I didn’t want to make it too easy.”

“I guess that I fit the bill of a double-agent then. You taking me in?”

“No. When you accessed Tusk’s INQ data, I was alerted and started watching you through the terminal’s camera, and also I saw your screen. Knowing you, you probably noticed something different — slower screens, a lagged interface, that sort of thing. After you shut your station down, I performed a deep analysis of any interactions you have had with any electronic equipment within the last few months. You’re clean.”

“So, when you acted surprised earlier, you were just joking?”

“Well, I was surprised you’d gotten here as quickly as you did, but I heard you quite a bit before I reacted to you. So yes, I acted shocked. I believe you would call it ‘acting’.”

“I guess. But wha—”

Seridan paused, hearing movement. The soft hiss of oiled hydraulics slithered down the corridor. Then, footsteps. There was only one set of feet, and the sounds were muffled, slightly. Whoever it was, they were trying not to be heard. Odds were, though, that they didn’t expect a certain Miraluka with very sharp senses to be around.

“Solari, did you pick up any other alerts from INQ members? Someone’s coming and they’re trying not to be heard.”

“I only got tabs on you, and some Proselyte from Taldryan. That one’s not worth their salt, and don’t pose much threat. I’ll go hide, and watch you’re superior skills.”

“Was that sarcasm?”

“Quite possibly.”

“I see.”

Solari retreated through a door that looked like a closet. Seridan took his cloak off, and pulled his INQ cowl over his head. He took his saber staff from his back, holding it loosely in his left hand. He retreated into a far corner of the room, so that he could see the entrance clearly, but just enough out of the way that he wouldn’t be spotted immediately.

As the footsteps approached, Seridan tensed. But there was no need. Through the door stepped a tall, athletically build man, with a saber at his hip and a staff on his back. The hilt was ornate, carved intricately with a trim of gold. Not the Proselyte that Solari mentioned.

“May I assist you?” Seridan asked. The man sharply turned his head to look at Seridan, as if suspicious, but he quickly followed up by replying a jovial tone, “Ah yes, please. I was

wondering if you'd seen a Seridan Brehevik around. I must speak with him urgently, in private. High-level stuff, you understand."

"I'm sure I can find him. Whose name should I tell him?"

"Tusk. Jeremon Tusk."

"Mr Tusk," Seridan countered, without a pause. "I'm afraid no one here is familiar with you. I'm afraid I need to know your intentions before allowing you to speak with Mr Brehevik."

"Is that so. I see. Well, he is suspected of being a high-level INQ traitor. I'am here to corner him."

"Duly noted. I take it, then, you want me to tell him that you're here to give him a mission, or some such ploy?"

"That may be good. Oh, wait — tell him the truth, but then say that I'm here to help him disappear unnoticed. He may suspect something otherwise."

Seridan chuckled, abruptly, "I'll make sure he gets the memo."

He moved from the corner, towards pseudo-Tusk. As he moved closer, he was more sure: this person was not only lying, but they were not Force-sensitive, which indicated that the saber was stolen. As he got closer, Tusk got more and more agitated.

"Is everything okay, sir" He squealed.

"Perfectly. Oh, and called me Seridan. I ain't got time for that 'sir' poodoo."

Tusk paled dramatically.

"So, what were you going to do, when you met Seridan, anyway?"

"I was going to do this," It came out barely as a whisper.

Tusk reached to his belt, and drew the stolen saber. Seridan knocked it out of his hand with the Force immediately. The Ranger stowed his own saber and drew his sword from his back, allowing Tusk time to draw his staff. As Tusk swung the staff horizontally, somewhat skillfully, Seridan flipped over it and spun, ending with his sword at Tusk's neck.

"Who sent you?"

Tusk shook his head urgently.

"I see."

Seridan pulled his sword back, as if to strike. Tusk's eyes widened in horror, and failed to see Seridan's other hand knock him on the temple. Tusk crumpled. Seridan sighed in dissatisfaction. He was suspected, which wasn't a good place to be. He was a lightie, true, but he was loyal. The DB had been a decent place for him, and for the most part, he was glad to be a part of INQ.

"You **are** clean, right?" The mechanical voice came from behind him.

"Yeah, I'm clean. I may leave a few people alive at the end of everything, but I ain't no traitor."

And now that I am sought after, I must take extra care in my activities. SeNet must be preserved.