

March Isles, Judecca

As the sun settled into the sea horizon and the clouds melted into oranges and purples, Judas, Brutus and Cassius rose from their slumber to greet the nightlife of this planet. On the March Isles and inside the Skald's office, smoke and dance music filled the area with an infectious trance. As the white smoke leaked between the doors and the music was soft on the ears outside, the Quarren and his two guests, Lucyeth and Rosh Nyine, sat inside with drinks and smokes. The two Aediles sat on guest chairs, as Lucyeth sat in the reclining desk chair, placing his feet onto the desk and holding a large death stick. Both Rosh and Qor leaned back in their own chairs and bobbed their heads to the rhythm of the music, feeling relaxed and serene in this environment. With a death stick in hand, Rosh inhaled it deeply and raised his feet onto a stand.

"Maybe we should make a move soon?" Rosh asked curiously, his eyes closed.

"Nah, the party doesn't start without us." Qor said, as he relit his death stick. The two seemed to be in a trance world of their own, as the smoke consumed their area.

"But they have food, and i'm starving." Lucyeth spoke up as he exhaled a mushroom of smoke, his pink eyes content with his situation. It almost seemed like he didn't want to move.

"Come on, we better bounce. We can bring the vodka with us." The Quarren said, as he took one big inhalation of his stick, then stubbed it out in the tray and stood. The duo followed suit, bagging as many bottles as they could and drinking the cups down, while Lexic took the death sticks into his pockets along with a lighter. With a quick tug, Qor opened the automatic doors of his office and a cloud of smoke followed him out, masking his appearance for a few seconds. At least until Rosh stumbled out with the bags of spirits and liquor, while Lucyeth swaggered through the door and gave the standing guard a confident yet lazy salute. The trio headed down the hallway as they stumbled into each other and the glasses inside the bags clashed with that familiar glass sound. Once they reached the reception area, the glass doors swooshed open, the sky blue twilight, the neon orange of streetlights and the brilliant white from the speeder headlights bathed them and blinded them temporarily.

"Damn Lexic, you need to turn those lights off. Killing my eyes here man!" Lucyeth said, as he hissed and shielded his eyes. Unfortunately he did so at the wrong moment, and banged his head into the door of the speeder. Luckily the bottles didn't crack, but his knee became badly hurt. Stumbling and wobbling his way towards the Quaestor of Excidium, Qor reached down and quickly grabbed the DL-44 from Lucyeth's ankle. Shaking and bobbing in his hand, the Quarren stuck his tongue out in concentration and fired a few missed shots at the nearby streetlight.

"I'll get it for you, Lucy, don't worry." Qor said, as he stumbled against the speeder and fired another haphazard shot. This stray shot whisked against the neck of the light, cutting it open and causing it to dangle violently. The wires were the only things holding it up in place, as the glass smashed against the long metal neck and blew out the light. Joyful and dancing

around in his moment of triumphant luck, Qor failed to notice a displeased guard come jogging over and immediately snatched the blaster from his hands.

“Uh...i’m sorry sir, but I can’t let you have that.” The commander said as he holstered the blaster in his empty pocket. The Quarren staggered around to face the soldier’s helmet and lightly tapped on the visor.

“You’re no fun, Commander. I’m trying to show my colleagues here some hospitality and you’re preventing me from doing so. I should cut your pay check by two months for this.” His slurred speech became almost inaudible for the soldier, but he got a grasp on what was spoken. “I apologise sir, but we need you to get into the speeder. You have a party to enjoy, sir.” The commander said as he ushered the trio into the speeder, while the droid pilot ignited the engines and closed the doors for them.

“Yes! We do! Onwards, tin man. I need to get drunk! Oh look, a credit.” Rosh said, as he immediately dropped onto the floor and slapped his face against the felt. The vehicle droid just shook his head as they took off into the night.

Petitor Umbrarum, Judecca

As the pitch black of the night consumed the landscape, the three moons glimmered in the distance giving only a sliver of silver light into the gardens of the Dante Estate. The speeder slowly parked in front of the elaborate double doors, as a service droid walked up and opened the speeder for the guests. A large cloud of smoke gushed and rose above the doors, misting the droid’s field of vision while the trio carefully stepped from the car and headed towards the doors. Rosh with a deathstick in his mouth, flipped a credit to the service droid and nodded softly as he followed Lucyeth. Lexic slowly opened the door and fixed the death stick in his mouth as he entered, observing the guests who were dancing, singing and socialising near the bar and on the dance floor. He noticed the familiar faces, as well as unfamiliar yet powerful figures standing around. One of the most notable was Valhavoc, the Fist of the Brotherhood who stood next to the Voice, Evant, and whispered things together. Together, Rosh and Lucyeth walked inside, dropped their outside robes off and went to find a table.

“I’ll see you guys soon, just need to find the boss and dropped these at the mini-bar.” Qor said as he walked towards the kitchen.

“It’s not so mini, Squid. Don’t get too occupied, we still have the death sticks!” Rosh gave a wink to his brotherly colleague in the most covert way. Qor was unsure what he meant by being occupied, but this was a party. There was bound to be members approaching him to talk, bugging him with questions or just generally being flirts. He walked further into the house and found a group of very familiar faces by the bar. Eether stood by the tender with Elinia Rei, as they spoke business terms, while Delak and Chrome were taking shots of brandy and coughing after the liquor hit their throats. With a pleasant smile on his face, Qor

strode over to his Imperium colleagues then pulled out his own shot glass as he lay the bag of liquor on the bar for the tender droid.

“Pour me one, Delly, I could match you guys.” He chuckled as Chrome raised a brow in a mixture of surprise and glee.

“Lexic, this is the loser’s final. We tried beating Jorm and Eether, but to no avail Eether won. I don’t know how he does it.” Delak said as he pour the last brandy into three shots, on a count to three the trio drank them straight down and turned the glasses over onto the counter, coughing raspily. “I think it’s in his blood, Delak, he is Zeltron you know?” The Quarren said in a husky voice. “Geez, that brandy is strong in the Force huh?” Chrome said as he inspected the bottle, Qor chuckled and patted his shoulder softly.

“I’ll see you guys soon, just need to speak with the boss” The Quarren said as he walked to Eether and Eli. The Shadow Guard leaders just nodded and began pouring vodka shots from Qor’s bottle. Just then, Eether turned to the Quarren and began to lead him away from the bar. “Ah Lexiconus, Dante and Xen would like a word with you upstairs in the Quaestor’s private lounge. Head directly to the top floor, then turn right and go through those double doors at the end. Lexic, this is important so use my cologne to freshen up and keep the jokes aside, alright?” As Eether spoke to the Quarren, he nodded in agreement and made his way towards the elegant stairs that were back in the hallway of the house. He could see in the main living area that Rosh and Lucyeth were already preoccupied by the dancing Zeltrons courtesy of Eether and Jorm. He decided to leave them to it and descended the long stairway.

Once at the top level of the noble house, Qor was greeted by the paintings of the Dante family and floral patterns across the walls, doors and window panes. The sound of the dance music and shouts of joy were being muffled by the expensive flooring and wood. The Quarren slightly stumbled against the bannister above the stairs as he turned right and found himself looking down a darkened hallway, only lit by the pink light from the bathroom. Qor quickly made his way towards their and pushed his way inside, balancing himself on the sink. Gazing into the mirror with his blurry eyes, the Quarren started pouring the cold water and splashed his face a few times just to keep himself sharp and awake. The coolness was a strong welcome to him as he chuckled in delight, then splashed more onto his face and forehead. His tentacles began to lap up the running water and covered themselves in the cool liquid. Qor then reached for the mirror and opened it to find a cupboard of medical and hygiene products behind it. Stumbling his big fingers around in there, he found a bottle of men’s spray cologne and sprayed his entire neck with the can. His gills began to clog with the horribly tasting stuff and he hacked up some sea water mucus, then spat it into the basin. With a sharp inhale, he looked at himself back in the mirror, as he heard some ruffling and heavy breathing in the bathtub. The shower curtain was over, so there was no way of telling who it was. But with a quick swipe of his hand, the Force pushed the loose curtain aside to reveal an off-duty soldier passionately kissing a Twi’lek dancer, both half naked and too drunk to care about the Quarren. With a heavy sigh, Qor left the bathroom and shut the door.

Satisfied with the way his appearance had turned out, Qor turned back towards the double doors of the private lounge and walked towards them with a high confidence. He knocked twice on the door, loud enough for people to know he was coming, then opened the door and stepped inside. There, he was met with Kell Dante sitting at the chair of the main desk, and Xen'Mordin on the guest chair. With a motion of his hand, Qor was asked to walk forward and Xen used the Force to push a chair open. The Quarren sat comfortably on the chair as he looked at both men in turn and smiled. He noticed a bottle of expensive port on the desk, with three glasses, two already full and one sat at the bottle. Extending his hand, Qor used the Dark Side to lift the glass and guide it into his open palm. He then chuckled as he inspected the fine crystal.

"You brought the good stuff out, I take it this is going to be a thorough conversation, sirs?" The Aedile of Imperium asked his superiors, who still remained silent until Xen gave a nod to Dante and watched.

"Lexiconus Qor, we need to assure ourselves that the future of the March Isles and House Imperium will be secure, fruitful and content with the majority of the population. We believe this can be done in you? Do you believe that too?" Kell Dante stated as he sipped his own port and offered to pour Qor's, to which he held a steady hand out as the crimson water poured gracefully.

"I believe that this house was built on the trust, faith and justice from the leadership efforts that were strived to improve and garden this unit to success. In our hard work, mistakes are learnt from, our tactics and plans are being consistently popularised and the general population admire our strong leadership by showing their happiness and satisfaction in their safety. I believe in the next few months, this will only become greater. We just need to clear back our threats and dissipate this zombie infestation." Lexic confidently said with a clear mind and a sharp tongue, while Xen and Dante looked at him with a smirk.

"So what else can we do about this infestation?" Dante asked his Aedile, Qor could tell this may be a long night and downed his port fast.