Two Inquisitors Walk Into A Bar

By Shadow Nighthunter

**34 ABY**

**Ohmen City, Judecca**

**Cantina**

Music and laughing filled the air as the night’s patrons at a cantina were ecstatic from drunkenness and entertainment. Dancers of both Twi’lek and human kind put on their show as the musicians provided the erotic music that entranced many. Those not enslaved by the performance were laughing and drinking with friends as the bartender grinned from the potential revenue that continued to enter his bar. So contagious was the gay atmosphere that even rivals sang and drank with rivals. However, the festive spirit didn’t quite touch the lone Inquisitor that stepped through the threshold of the establishment.

The black and red-dressed Inquisitor made her way to a booth in the far corner where she sat down within the veil of shadows. A young Togruta barmaid came over to receive the newcomer’s order, of which the woman ordered for a bottle of Corellian wine. As soon as the Togruta left, the woman sighed and bowed her head. Though her Emperor had agreed to allow members of the Dark Jedi Brotherhood to gather within the city to “mingle,” Shadow Nighthunter didn’t quite take to the idea. In fact, she had planned to stay at home with her husband, but the man himself had insisted she go while he rested after training. Reluctantly, she had yielded to Brandon Tarsus, and had made her way into Ohmen City from the woods she lived in.

Not many members from the other Clans were at the cantina. In fact, many of them were at a formal club. If lucky, those present in the cantina would leave her bed. Of course, the battle team leader knew better, and didn’t allow herself to get her hopes up. Such was her caution well put aside, for it wasn’t long when a tall man with long, black hair and grey eyes approached her. He was clad in black, with only a white tunic within his dark robes. The strange yellow starburst within his eyes caught Shadow’s attention. The experience and silence within his eyes told her that he was to be respected, no matter who he was. Even if she wished to be left alone, she wouldn’t be rude to a man whose presence demanded respect.

“Mind if I join you?” the man asked as he smiled slightly.

Shadow bowed her head. “I don’t mind at all, good sir. Please, sit down.”

The man sat across from her just as the woman’s wine arrived. The man across from her placed his order with the Togruta before he returned his focus to Shadow. “Who is it that I have the pleasure of sitting with?”

“Shadow Nighthunter of House Excidium,” the Sith replied.

“It’s a pleasure to meet you, Shadow,” the man said as he nodded in acknowledgment. “I am Atra Ventus.”

The name rang with recognition throughout Shadow’s mind as she realized who she was with. “If my memory serves me well, you’re Praetor to the Voice, yes?”

“Indeed, I am, and if word is true, you’re leader of a battle team?”

Shadow was a bit surprised that someone like Atra would know of her position. “It’s true. I lead the battle team. If I may be frank, I’m surprised to see you in a place like this.”

The Dark Jedi shrugged. “I wanted to get away from the others for a bit. The place was a bit crowded. Didn’t quite like it when someone almost spilt their wine on me.”

“I can understand that.”

“I’m guessing you wished to avoid the gathering as well?”

Shadow nodded. “Yes…I’m not exactly into that sort of thing. I prefer being alone and away from prying eyes.”

“I see. You feel comforted in the shadows it seems.”

“Very much so, yes,” Shadow said. “Within the shadows, a Sith waits and abides his or her time before they strike their enemy in surprise.”

“The same could be said for me perhaps,” the Praetor said. “Such is it also that many people’s fears dwell within the darkness of shadows…just waiting to come out and devour their courage if not their life.”

Shadow couldn’t help but smile a bit from hearing Atra’s words. “You’re very acquainted with fear and the dark, but you don’t let it control you…at least that is what I sense.”

“Only because I allow you to, and only because the same goes for you as well,” the man answered. “You believe in a balance, but you’re not afraid to use the darkness to get what you wish as long as you don’t let rage and overconfidence take hold and bind you to failure.”

Shadow was in awe with how well Atra seemed to read her like a book, and how it seemed both had quite a bit in common. “I’ve…never expected to meet someone who quite feels the same as I do about controlling the dark rage within. Even my sister succumbs to it and the power the fire of the dark side entices her with.”

Atra smiled. “Well, I must say I’m surprised to even find a Sith who doesn’t let her emotions take control. Such a thing is rare. Many wouldn’t even call you a Sith.”

Shadow shrugged. “I guess I’ll just have to be that one Sith who’s different…and one who doesn’t wish to fall like many of the ancients did from their mistakes.”

“Such observation and caution is wise, Shadow Nighthunter, as long as you don’t allow caution to keep you from your true potential.”

The half-sephi nodded. “It is something I work on every day, Atra Ventus.”

The Togruta arrived just then with a cup of tea for the Dark Jedi. Shadow watched as the man made sure his tea was perfect as he stirred it with the Force. Though Shadow had wished to be left alone, Atra was proving to be quite pleasing to be around.

“So, Shadow,” Atra started in a whisper. “Chief Inquisitor now, huh? I must congratulate you for such an elevation.”

“I...well, thank you. I’m guessing you’re working for the Voice as well in that regards.”

“Indeed, I am. A seeker of knowledge for Evant I am.”

“I guess I can say the same. Knowledge is power after all, Praetor, and I am willing to risk what I must to obtain it for the Dark Council, my Quaestor, and myself.”

“You’re determination will reward you, I’m sure.” Atra took a sip of his tea before he continued. “Just always remember that with great knowledge come consequences. Always watch your back, and never hold back from using what power you have to protect such knowledge from the wrong hands.”

“But…of course.” Shadow took a sip from her wine before she looked at Atra, his eyes catching hers. “I honestly wouldn’t have minded having you as a master with such wisdom and guidance you’ve been giving me.”

“Ah, but you already carry such wisdom from experience,” Ventus said with a sense of respect. “You’ve been through enough to know what risks you face at every turn.”

The Dark Jedi looked around before sipping his tea again, and for a while, both were silent. It was only when Atra finished his tea did he speak again as he stood up. “It was nice to meet you, Shadow Nighthunter…perhaps the Force will bring us together again.”

Shadow nodded as she too stood up. “Perhaps. Maybe one of these days we might be lucky and pursue knowledge together as fellow servants of the Grandmaster,” the Sith said in reference to Inquisitorius.”

Atra managed to grin a bit. “You never know. Best of luck to you, Shadow,” he said as he bowed.

Shadow bowed in return, and watched him make his exit before she sat down. She still knew very little about Atra Ventus, but she had come to admire the man. She could only hope that the both of them would meet each other again.

*I should get out more often.*

Content with having spent some time with the Praetor, the Sith took another sip of her wine before letting her mind drift away with the music and rowdy patrons.