

Kar Alabrek, Tarthos  
Ragnos Cathedral

Inyri had returned to Ragnos Cathedral to further her studies of an academic nature. Being an unknown within the Clan was both beneficial and not, since it gave her freedom to grow and learn but it also meant that it was going to take quite a bit of effort to get noticed. In training, she wanted to remain unknown, but now, she had to make a name for herself if she was going to get anywhere. For the time being, however, her studies would continue until such time as she could earn the notice of her peers and superiors.

As she sat alone in the gardens, reading over a datapad with material relevant to her course work, a hooded man sat down next to her. Unconsciously, Inyri shifted away from him, but said nothing as she continued to study. Likely someone meditating on the meaning of the Force or something, Inyri wasn't going to bother him but wanted no company right now.

"If you want peace, prepare for war."

Inyri turned towards the hooded man, arching an eyebrow. It was a strange thing to say unprompted, but more for Inyri, it was strange because that was how her father summed up why he joined the Republic military, word for word.

"Your attitude has attracted some attention, Acolyte. Look back to your studies, but listen to me carefully," The man said quietly. Inyri looked back to her datapad, but the words no longer had her interest.

"You are an outsider, trained by an outsider. Many see you as a target, but they are fools and are ignoring the asset you really are. A war is coming, and we must all play our parts. The question is, Acolyte, what part will you play?" The man asked.

"You're referring to another civil war," Inyri let out a sigh of annoyance, "Idiots. Doesn't the phrase 'united we stand, divided we fall' mean anything to anyone? Or is it just because most of the people are Sith who want to just keep playing their little games because tradition demands it?"

"You already know the answers. Your voice is going against the voice of millions, but perhaps your stubborn nature means you will not yield. And perhaps you can take this fight to a battlefield you've chosen to make your own; the shadows." The man stood up and walked away. Inyri looked up and saw he left a datacard on the bench where he had been seated. Inyri slid back down the bench and scooped it up, slotting it into her datapad.

Once loaded, the datapad changed from her course material to a building's schematics, with various holographs of the interior and exterior. Attachment files began to pop up for her to access, which she started looking into. One showed images of what appeared to be a street

gang in the building, armed with blasters, vibroblade weapons and the occasional blunt weapon, either on patrol or assaulting civilians. The next attachment pointed out a specific room on the third level, facing out into the street. The final attachment had an identification card, or holograph of one, of an internal security agent, with MISSING IN ACTION emblazoned in red over it.

“Alright. We all have to play our parts? I’ll play mine then. Time to go to work,” Inyri said quietly to herself, standing up and departing the gardens.

Markosian City, Tarthos  
Red Sector

The building was an apartment block in the residential sector of Markosian City, though it was also in one of the rougher parts of town. The street gangs ran this part of town, local security gave them a wide berth as long as bribes were paid on time. Or at least that’s how things appeared. Inyri kept to herself as she walked down the sidewalk across from the target building, and saw that the street gangs had it surrounded. They wore flashy colors but covered their faces, and gave intimidating looks to anyone who lingered too long near the building.

Inyri did not do that, and instead kept walking, angling for the small shop next door that the gangs seemed entirely uninterested by. To the casual observer, there was nothing unusual about Inyri, she wore simple attire, but had a rucksack over her back. The shopkeep looked up at her, as if he was bored and she was interrupting his boredom with the horrible prospect of interacting with the public.

“Yes?” He asked with a tone that was as hospitable as a gundark.

“Got a ‘fresher?” Inyri asked with a fake accent, just in case he was questioned, she wanted to employ misdirection where she could.

“Back there.” The shopkeep replied and pointed to the back of his store. Inyri nodded and headed to it. Once she locked the door, she dropped the rucksack off her back and removed her jacket and ill fitting slacks that were over her stealth operations suit. From the rucksack, she pulled on a light blast vest and harness with pouches from it and pulled that on, as well as her Glie-44 blaster pistol, combat knife and lightsaber, slotting them in their respective places on her, before finally pulling on a black face mask that covered all but her eyes from view with black mesh fabric.

Once geared up, Inyri slipped out of the refresher area and ducked out into the back alley. Nightfall was coming, and the shadows would only serve to better conceal her from the street gangs. Inyri set off, her padded boots making very little sound against the duracrete she tread upon, and as she drew closer to the building, she tucked into a crouch and drew upon the

Force. She began to fade from view, using the Force to blend in with her environment and remain out of sight.

Her path took her up to a back gate leading from the alley to the back of the apartment building. Two gang members stood outside the building, between the gate and the back door, bickering about something of little importance. Inyri hunkered down next to the gate and peeked in, looking them over. One finally turned to head inside while the other scoffed and started towards the gate. Inyri leaned back and let her focus go for the moment, fading back into sight, though not in line of sight of the guard.

As soon as the guard was about to cross the threshold into the alley, Inyri struck. She slammed her right arm out sideways into the gang member's chest, knocking the wind out of him and causing him to double over. Inyri then grabbed him by the head and pulled him into her cover, out of sight. The young Human male struggled under her grip, but Inyri kept her hand over his mouth while her other hand kept him pinned to the ground.

"Shush," Inyri whispered and then punched him in the head, knocking him out. The gang member went slack as he slipped into unconsciousness, and Inyri leaned back out to see if his companion was coming for him. Satisfied they were not, Inyri set off at a crouch towards the door. Cautiously, she opened it, hitting the open switch with her right hand while her left rested on the grip of her blaster pistol. It slid open to reveal a hallway around a common room where a group of thugs were sitting at a table playing some card game.

Inyri let the Force shroud her once more as she slowly moved to avoid being spotted, sticking to the hallway around the common room. The hall led to a set of stairs, allowing her to skirt the notice of the gangsters playing their game and head further into the building. The stairwell was square and winding, following the walls up into the building. Inyri started up the stairs, reaching the first floor easily when one of the gangsters came out from the first floor hallway.

"What the?" The red skinned Twi'lek male said to himself. Inyri cursed internally, she was still making something of a distortion this close. She let her focus drop a second time, and grabbed the Twi'lek, her left hand wrapping his right arm behind his back while her right hand grabbed him by the back of the head and slammed him hard into the railing. Once he was dazed, she hauled him back up and wrapped her right arm around his throat, applying pressure. The Twi'lek struggled but soon fell limp as his air supply was choked off. After a moment, he stopped moving altogether. Inyri drug his body just out of view of the hallway, hoping to be out of here by the time the unconscious gangster was found in the stairwell.

Inyri continued up the stairs, managing to get past the second floor with minimal difficulty, and reached the third floor. Keeping low and against the right side wall, Inyri stepped carefully and slowly, drawing her blaster pistol. The walls were a collage of torn and fading paint and graffiti, the floors were a cheap tile that gave little response to her steps, and the lighting

was actually quite poor, several fixtures were in poor repair. All in all, it was a glaring contradiction to the image of the luxury advertised to the public about the city's Red Zone.

She reached the apartment at the end of the hall, and through the door, she could hear muffled voices, several of them. The cost of operating with minimal support meant that she didn't have proper gear to do this right, so once more, Inyri was going to have to improvise with the tools she had, rather than doing it with the tools she wished she had. She called the Force to her, building it up before slamming the button to open the apartment door.

As soon as it hissed open, Inyri pointed her right hand at the closest being, a Human female and let loose with a blinding flash of light in front of her eyes. The woman staggered, while four others turned, drawing weapons. One of them, Inyri started to notice as she moved to grab the stunned woman, was not dressed like the gang members. Regardless, though, she had to act, as there was a figure slumped in a chair in the center of the room, bound with some sort of cables or another.

Inyri grabbed the woman by her neon glowing necklace, gripping hard with her right hand and put her between the other occupants in the room and the masked Acolyte. She brought her Glie-44 up, lining the sights up on the rightmost opponent in the room and fired a single blue bolt at him. The bolt caught him squarely in the chest and pitched him backwards onto the floor. Inyri drug her captive around to bring her sights onto the next gangster in the room, and squeezed off a double-tap. Both bolts found their marks, and this target fell to his knees and then onto his back with two smoking holes in his chest.

The third and fourth occupants in the room drew their weapons and fired. Crimson bolts seared into the back of the woman Inyri was holding. Inyri sneered under her facemask and shoved the dying woman backwards, ducking to get behind the counters while the woman staggered back and finally landed on her back, a look of surprise on her dying face. Bolts began slamming into the kitchenette and as soon as there was a break, Inyri came back up and fired a flurry of shots. The last gangster fell, leaving Inyri with the mystery occupant.

"You. You're not Security Forces. Who are you?" The man demanded. He was Human, middle aged, with black hair that was short, eyes that were green but a bit sunken, and a face of hard angles. He held a DL-18 blaster pistol in a single handed stance, but did not fire.

"You first." Inyri dropped back behind her cover, not willing to risk her life to a rookie mistake like talking to someone who was just shooting at her.

"This is a matter not concerning you. I do not answer to you, child." The man spat back. Inyri opened herself to her senses, and realized the man talking to her was Force Sensitive, but strongly rooted in the Dark Side. But he also wasn't particularly powerful, maybe a cut or two above her but not by much.

"I'm here, so I think it does concern me, so drop the arrogant kriffer act," Inyri replied with an unseen smirk.

"You impetuous child. You have no idea what you've gotten into. Leave now and I may yet spare your life."

"I follow and lead as you pass, dress yourself in black, my darkness lasts. I say goodbye at night and morning hi. I flee the light, but without the sun, your view of me would be gone. What am I?" Inyri asked, biding her time as she called the Force to her.

"You..ha. Hahaha. Your leaders send a student? You really have no clue what you're caught in, and you'll die acting like a schoolgirl spewing nonsense. Oh. This speaks *volumes*." The man started laughing. Inyri decided now was as good as time as any to capitalize on the man's arrogance, and summoned the Force to damper the man's connection to the Force. Swinging out of cover, she charged right at her target. Taken off guard, the man's reaction speed was too slow, his surprise and arrogance doing half of Inyri's job for him. He got off a single wild shot before Inyri responded by slamming the barrel of her pistol into his solar plexus, knocking the wind out of him. She then used the butt of her pistol to knock his pistol out of his weakened grip, eblowed him in the face to buy some time to holster her pistol, and then once her pistol was holstered, grabbed him by the throat.

Inyri slammed the man into the wall, spun him around, pinning his right wrist to the small of his back with her left hand, and forced his head against the wall with her right hand. He started to struggle until Inyri smacked his head against the wall.

"Now then. You were saying?" Inyri asked.

"You are going to die a horrible death, child," The man sneered.

"Right. Because right now, you're totally in a position to dictate anything. So, why are you in such a nice part of town with this gentleman, who I can only assume since he hasn't moved at all since I showed up is dead, and threatening people who show up looking for said gentleman?" Inyri said.

"You'll find out soon enough, when you are tortured within an inch of your life every day for the rest of your life. You'll find a new meaning of torment."

"Mhm. Well, I'm not as skilled, so let's just do this like your friends would." Inyri roughly grabbed the man in her grasp and shuffled him into the kitchenette, pinning him against the refrigeration unit. She used her off-hand to open the door, kicked the back of the man's knee to get him down to a knee, and slammed the door on his head. As he tried to get up and used his right hand to grip the inside of the unit, she slammed the door a second time, catching his arm. Roughly, she hauled the man back to his feet, pinning him back to the exterior of the unit.

"Who are you? And what are you doing here?" Inyri hissed.

"You think some amatuer can extract information from me with a little pain? Ha!" The man barked a laugh. Inyri rolled her eyes and drug him over to the stove, spinning him around. She slammed a fist into his stomach first, doubling him over, and then used her right leg to pull his left leg out from under him, dropping him on his backside onto the floor.

"Oh, I'm so scared, what..." The man was cut off as Inyri kicked him into the stove. He slumped to the side, but was still awake. Inyri grabbed his arm, flipped the oven open and slammed his arm into it. Given the sound that accompanied, along with the man's screaming, she was pretty sure she had fractured or broken a bone this time. Inyri hauled him to his feet.

"Who. Are. You?" Inyri demanded.

"I...I am an agent...of...Darth Pravus," The man managed between whimpers in pain.

"...and the man you killed?" Inyri asked.

"He was...was a mole. We used him...but he turned double...loose ends and all..." The agent wheezed.

"Why? What's the point of this?" Inyri demanded.

"You're weak. Your clan is weak. Kill me, but you'll still be weak." The man had found his determination once more.

"You're the one that broke after I broke your arm. Guess that makes you an authority on weakness. But I'm not going to kill you," Inyri smirked under her facemask, and drug her captive back to the common area.

"Mercy is a weakness," The man taunted.

"This isn't a mercy. Your superiors are going to be quite unhappy at how quickly you broke. But before they kill you, because they will, let's face it, I want you to deliver a message. To whomever it is that sent you to spy on us, of course. Semantics as far as who it really is, I just need it delivered before you go out like the coward you are," Inyri explained, "You solve that riddle yet?"

"What riddle?"

"I follow and lead as you pass, dress yourself in black, my darkness lasts. I say goodbye at night and morning hi. I flee the light, but without the sun, your view of me would be gone. What am I?" Inyri repeated, letting it sink in before continuing.

"Figure it out. And then tell your masters that just as sure as you can't escape that, you can't shake me. If they want to perpetuate this pointless cycle of killing each other, then they are representing a way of life that will be the end of the Brotherhood, and even if it kills me, I'll make it my mission in life to bring that way of life down. Don't mistake my mercy for weakness, don't mistake my lack of experience as ineptitude. Even if I die, I'll die a martyr to a cause that will wipe all of you out in time," Inyri said, before drawing her pistol and jammed the barrel at the back of the agent's left knee.

"You're on a fool's crusade," The man spat.

"You won't live long enough to see if I'm going to see it through." Inyri pulled the trigger, dropping the man to the floor, howling in pain with his left leg now useless.

"I'll stand alone against the tide if I have to." Inyri stepped for the door, leaving the agent to his fate.

Kar Alabrek, Tarthos  
Ragnos Cathedral  
THREE DAYS LATER

Inyri returned to the gardens, taking the same seat she had before, and resumed her studies, waiting for the mystery man that had sent her on her hunt. She had hoped that was what he had intended for her to find and do, not to join these fools in their purge. There had already been talk of a purge when she had joined at the Shadow Academy, and now there was a much larger one looming on the horizon, it seemed. She was but one Journeyman standing against the entire Brotherhood, but she'd either find allies to stand with, or she'd die alone with her convictions and a misguided belief she could change something larger than herself.

Deep down, she feared that she had come to a place that was unwilling to change and would tear itself apart in the name of some ancient traditions rather than adapt and overcome. That in the end, she would die and no one would lament her passing or her cause, but rather comment that she was a foolish student who was crushed by the tide she stood against. Her convictions were strong, but there would always be doubt. Either she would find a movement to stand against the insanity, or she would find that the Brotherhood willingly would continue the same cycle.

"What did you discover, Acolyte?" The hooded man asked, having taken a seat while she mulled over her thoughts.

“Darth Pravus had an agent abduct the operative. Guess the guy was a double agent, feeding them information, and they were tying up loose ends. Sounds to me like the purge that started with the Shadow Academy is about to hit us ricky tick,” Inyri replied, “I won’t sit by idly and let some fanatics committed to tradition come kill people because they don’t know anything else.”

“Even if you’re the only one?” The man asked.

“It’ll be the shortest rebellion ever, but yes.” Inyri nodded once.

“You will soon be an enemy of the Inquisitorius. They’ll figure out who you are and hunt you down for your heresy, you’ll likely die in the shadows, forgotten and alone. But I will inform the leadership of your findings. Perhaps your death will not be in vain,” The hooded man said.

“Don’t count me out so fast. If they operate in the shadows, that’s my home turf. I’ll fight them there, and you tell whoever you report to that. I don’t care if I’m just considered a *mere* Acolyte. I will fight.” Inyri replied.

“I’ll pass it along, but you’ll likely be dead before anyone acts on your words. No one can save you. Good day.” The hooded man stood and departed, leaving Inyri sitting in the gardens with a scowl.