

Ragnos Cathedral Forward Operating Base
Ragnos Cathedral, Kar Alabrek

Night had fallen over the Cathedral, and Inyri was unable to sleep, even doped up on painkillers that were intended to deal with her recent injuries. She couldn't explain it, but something was beckoning to her, calling out for her. Inyri rose from her cot and pulled her tactical vest on, tying the arms of her jumpsuit around her waist, trying to find what was keeping her awake. Though not on the surest of footing, Inyri made her way out of the medical tent and out onto the grounds of the Cathedral proper.

Work crews were trying to rebuild the place, while soldiers patrolled the area, and the last of the previous tenants were processed for arrest or deportation. Inyri ignored all of them as she walked, heading towards the tower that she had engaged the enemy at. The work had yet to begin here, the tower's exterior was torn up from the hails of blaster fire that had been intended for her. The bodies had been at least removed, but as she entered the tower, she could see the casing of the sonic grenade that had incapacitated her.

But what she hadn't noticed before, likely due to the heat of the moment during the fighting, was that the stairwell descended even further down. And whatever was calling out to her was down here. Drawing her pistol and a glowrod, she activated the latter and started down, slowly, unsure what she was going to find. Given the situation, any possibility existed at this point. The stone steps led her further down to a large iron door. Carefully, Inyri opened it, the glowrod's light tracking with the barrel of her pistol and her eyes.

It was some dusty old catacomb, likely not touched for some time, but she still was not willing to drop her guard as she continued further inside. Dust, thick cobwebs, and a pervasive staleness to the air all hung around her as she moved. The only sounds were ones she made, her boots thudding against the floor, her gear clicking and clacking as she moved, and the odd click from her blaster as she moved it as well.

The stone tunnels seemed to be unending, leading her down a labyrinth of ancient history, inscriptions carved into the walls in a language she was unfamiliar with but could have been Ancient Sith if she had to guess, carvings of people and places that she was equally unaware of what they signified. Inyri wondered what was so desperate for her to find it, because she had to be an affront to everything in here, completely ignorant of what this all meant and likely nowhere near the sort of person the legacy of this place was meant for.

"That's hardly fair to yourself, now is it?" A voice asked. Inyri spun around, but nothing was there. It was a female's voice, distant and yet right with her. It bore an accent reminiscent of a Coruscanti accent, prim and proper.

"Who's there?" Inyri asked, looking around.

“This place, all of these symbols, these stories, they once were part of everything I once held true in my heart. A sign of where we came from, and Marka Ragnos, well, I was to believe him to be a living god amongst the Sith, a martyr of what we should all aspire to be.” The voice mused. Inyri kept moving forward.

“Who are you?” Inyri asked.

“A phantom. Long since dead, yet a part of me has been trapped here for several millennia. Rather an unfortunate fate.” The voice continued. Inyri rounded a corner into a small chamber, where a cube of fading red and blue lights sat. The spectral image of a woman, roughly her age, in armored robes that somehow were reminiscent of some of the Sith statues being renovated, appeared before her.

“I was once known as Darth Vindex, though my real name was once Lesani before that title was bestowed upon me. I was the right hand of the Dark Council, the spirit of vengeance upon the enemies of the Sith Empire. But, well, I’ve had some time to think.” The ghost said.

“...I must be suffering from the painkillers, this can’t be real.” Inyri replied, blinking repeatedly.

“Oh, I assure you, I am quite real. But I’m also not long for this world. This holocron has been so long forgotten that even it is about to die. I’m not here to make a deathbed confession, I just want someone to talk to in my final hours. You intrigued me, I thought I’d ask you to come.” Darth Vindex replied. Inyri lowered her pistol.

“I thought holocrons were able to last an eternity.” Inyri said.

“Not quite. Mine was also damaged. I had hoped to teach some enterprising Sith acolyte the ways of the Dark Side, teach them to wield the lightsaber with deadly efficiency, to pass on my legacy. Instead, it was left here, alone. And as it fades, so do I. I didn’t do something right, it seems.” Vindex explained with a sad smile.

“Why not ask one of the actual Sith down here? I’m not interested in that belief.” Inyri asked.

“Because when you’ve had about four thousand years to ponder things, you gain some new perspectives. And you intrigued me because you’re neither. You’ll spare innocents and those who yield like a Jedi, yet you’ll also kill anyone you have to without a second thought. Not too many of those types around. You should at least try to understand those around you, though. You may not see any merit in it, but at least try to gain perspective on things.” Vindex explained.

Inyri nodded slowly, and Vindex began to fade slightly.

“You lack one thing; direction. You’re right now just a tool for your superiors to wield, but you drift without aim or goals. That’s no way to live, regardless of your philosophy in life. Find your purpose, be more than just something for these people to use. Find your cause and make it everything to you. Even as terrible as my purpose was, it was mine and I embraced it fully. Find yours and you will be unstoppable.” Vindex continued as she faded even more.

“Do you want me to do something for you? To make sure you live on in memory or something?” Inyri asked.

“No. Do that for yourself. I’m four thousand years too late for that, and I’ve made my peace with that ages ago. But, it’ll be at least nice to know at least one person will remember me for a time, instead of going out completely forgotten.” Vindex sighed as she was all but gone, “This will do.”

The ghost disappeared entirely, and the cube’s lights dimmed completely before crumbling before Inyri’s eyes. The Knight stood in the room, trying to process what she had just seen, but in the end, the ancient Sith Lord had a point; she needed a purpose, to be something more than a shadow operator for the Clan’s leadership. It wouldn’t come overnight, but she’d find it.

Without another word, Inyri backtracked out of the catacombs, shutting the door behind her and headed back up to exit the tower. As she stepped out, a pair of Warhost troops were walking by, and stopped as she stepped out.

“Something wrong, ma’am?” One of them asked.

“No. Just needed to take a walk. As you were, soldier.” Inyri said.

“Yes ma’am.” The soldier nodded and they continued their patrol as Inyri headed back to the medical tent and laid back down on the cot. But she still couldn’t sleep, now unable to shake the pang of sadness in her, that some ancient ghost just wanted someone to talk to before they became nothingness. And in a way, Inyri felt just as alone as Darth Vindex had, which only made her feel even more empty.

Hers was indeed a lonely profession, but in a thousand years, would anyone read of her exploits or seek out her holocron for knowledge, if she ever made one? Or would she be forgotten, cast out of the history books to instead contribute to someone else’s glory through her own deeds? Curling up tighter on the cot, Inyri suddenly felt very alone in this galaxy, and it was indeed an unpleasant thought.