

The Reign of High Councillor Atyiru Caesura Entar

Day 1

"Any idea what this emergency meeting is about, Councillor?" Alethia Archenksova asked by way of greeting as she slid up next to Mar Sûl, matching his pace as they made their way down the corridor. Voraskel Palace was a massive labyrinth of passages, apartments, and grand chambers, each more ornate and elaborate than the last. Even within the miniscule portion of the complex that had been granted to Odan-Urr by the Empress, it was a walk of several minutes to the formal Council Chambers from the guest quarters.

"Supposedly something about introducing a new arrival," Mar deadpanned. The Jedi stared straight ahead, maintaining his brisk pace, and spoke with an even tone of profound, soul-crushing boredom. He seemed to be in a good mood.

"Probably another Arconan," Alethia mused. "We haven't turned over a major operation to a recent defector in awhile." She stifled a giggle as she imagined Kordath Bleu scrambling to justify why he was caught rummaging through the Empress' wardrobe.

"I get along quite well with the Arconans, actually," Mar replied.

Archenksova shot him an amused look. "Didn't you threaten to behead their captured soldiers?"

That earned her a rare smile — or what passed for one, at any rate. "My dear, I didn't *threaten* to do it."

Ugh, sploosh. Take me now. "Councillor," Alethia said, grabbing his wrist and pulling him to a stop. "There's, ah..." she trailed off as she tried to think of a compelling reason to drag the taciturn crusader into the nearest cloakroom. "A heretic!" Archenksova burst out, before regaining enough self-control to continue in a hushed whisper. "Intelligence reports indicate that there are heretics in there." She pointed to a doorway.

Mar Sûl narrowed his eyes and reached for his lightsaber before Alethia shoved him into the closet, following him and and slamming the door behind her.

"No, Drachen! My decision is final," Arcia Cortel growled, storming down the hall after the council meeting.

"Come on, Arcia," Edgar tried to interrupt, but the admiral wasn't having it.

"No. I came here to get away from that woman."

"She can't be as bad as all that. She seemed nice." The Jedi struggled to keep up with his commander. "Besides, I thought you came here to avenge New Tython."

"Do you have any idea..." Arcia cut herself off, held her breath and counted to ten before continuing. "Drachen, I am just now getting the last of the glitter out of my hair. The Shadow Lady used to sneak flowers into the barrel of my sidearm. I became the unwilling adopted mother of at least a dozen small, fluffy animals who would defecate into my boots. One time I almost died because my entire bridge crew was too busy eating scones to notice we were under fire. I am going back to Selen and I suggest you do the same."

The pair nearly jumped when the door a few meters down the hallway opened and Alethia emerged, her hair in profound disarray and her lipstick mostly gone, smoothing out her dress and humming a happy tune. Mar stumbled out at her heels, seemingly disoriented.

"Where were you two?" Alethia started as Arcia shouted at her from down the hall.

"Intel briefing?"

"In the closet?"

"There were reports of infiltration," Mar said gravely. "We have disconfirmed them."

"Whatever," Arcia snorted. "Without you two at the vote, the Council just elected Atyiru the next High Councillor."

Alethia and Mar turned to look at each other in horror. "Uh, whoops?"

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Day 2

"Enter," the sing-song voice called out a half second before Alethia knocked.

Wonderful. She's one of those Jedi, Alethia thought, but all she said was "High Councillor, I —"

"Please, Alethia, call me Atty," the other woman interrupted, banning at her from beneath an ivory blindfold. Eyecloth? Face shield? Alethia could never keep these alien fashions straight. "Or at least Atyiru," the Arcona continued. "I'm thinking of charging the title anyway."

The legendarily cheerful Miraluka sat at a small but ornately inlaid desk in what used to be Turel Sorenn's quarters. Her bronze fingers tapped away at the terminal keypad.

"Of course," Alethia said, clearing her throat. "May I ask what you were planning on changing the title to?"

"Sunshine Lady. Hey, do you know how to work this thing? I've been trying to get this stupid thing to play *Hamilton* for like an hour."

Archenksova craned her neck around to get a look at the terminal screen. The dead, blank terminal screen of an inactive computer. "I'll... send a tech up to take care of that. In the meantime, I believe I have a briefing for you."

"Yes, of course," Atyiru beamed. "I reviewed those notes you sent over after the Council meeting yesterday. I'm terribly sorry you missed it hunting... heretics?"

"Something like that," Alethia answer, before desperately changing the subject. "Did you see the dossier on Blade Ta'var? It's quite remarkable that were we able to compromise a sitting Quaestor."

"Yeah, you should probably bring her over."

"I'm sorry?"

"Exfiltrate her as soon as you can."

"But, the intelligence ramifications of —"

"Do you know what 'ohana' means, Alethia?"

Archenksova frowned. "No, Councillor, I'm afraid I don't."

"Ohana means family," Atyiru state definitively. "And family means you don't leave lighties in a place where Pravus is going to find them and cut their heads off."

"O... kay," Alethia hissed through gritted teeth. "Did you see the proposed operation to take down Selika Roh?"

"Yes. I'm cancelling it."

"What?"

"I'm cancelling it. You guys should really be nicer to Selika. She's had a tough life. Have you even tried talking it out yet?"

"No. No Councillor, we have not."

The Reign of ~~High Councillor~~ Sunshine Lady Atyiru Caesura Entar

Day 5

"Sorenn, we *need* you." Alethia and Mar Sûl sat awkwardly fidgeting on the couch, trying to avoid making eye contact with Turel as he held the infant Togruta to his 'Mr. Milker' male breastfeeding apparatus.

"Atyiru is the most Jedi-like person I know. She was born for this job. You two just need to adjust a bit."

"She keeps leaving floral-scented beard oil around my chambers," Mar intoned. "It is most vexing."

"Yeah," Alethia grunted, lopping a stand of rainbow-dyed hair around one finger. "I'm sure that's just horrible for you. More importantly, she's tearing apart any program that isn't sufficiently nice."

"Wow, Alethia, that's got to be — what? All of yours?" Turel smirked before going back to cooing over Naryu.

"Except for the one I drew up for Fool's Day last year. We're actually doing that one."

"Wait, you're mailing self-help books to everyone in Tarentum?"

"With candy," Mar clarified. "Atyiru was very insistent on that point."

"Oh. Well, sorry guys. I've got a much more important mission these days." Turel looked down lovingly at the tiny Togruta spitting up on his shirt.

"Well that settles it," Alethia said flatly as soon as they were safely out of earshot. "We've got to kill her."