

I had received a message several days ago. I still kept a few contacts on Nar Shadda but I had never thought anyone would use it to track me down. I had never thought my name was that unusual but I must have been mistaken. There had been no threat in the message. There had been no appeal to my humanity, or begging involved for that matter. The message had simply implored me to meet with the sender within the Refugee Center. The whole thing left me with an odd knot in my stomach, but not because of the feeling that I was being set up. No, that feeling was still there.

The oddest thing was the name attached to the message: Bentre Stahoes.

That settled the matter for me. I had been working in a makeshift lab on Sepros. I had even succeeded in creating a Sithspawn from a Kath pup in my free time. This demanded my attention more than petty experiments. If this person thought they could get by using my name, they would find themselves in a great deal of pain.

Taking a breath, I choked back a cough. The air of Nar Shadda was never pleasant to begin with. All the time I had spent on the jungle planet of Sepros, I had been breathing air fresh with the scents of life. Nar Shadda was a world of metal and dead things. Though the Force flowed through it, it was like a fetid and diseased thing. I tried to stretch out in the Force, to take a stock of my surroundings. I felt something brush past me in the currents of the Force like a soft wind through trees.

"H'o there." The voice was gruff, and the accent unmistakable. I felt the hairs on the back of my neck stand up as I turned to regard the speaker. Familiar hazel eyes peered out at me from below a large brimmed hat. It was a style that some smugglers were given to, but in the Refugee Sector it felt woefully out of place. "So, yer 'at fellow calling himself Bentre then?" His accent was unmistakably Corellian in origin. His features were familiar, but there was no reason they wouldn't be. There were some small differences but he was unmistakably similar in appearance.

"Well, I go by the name I was given." I chose my words very carefully. Looking him over, I saw a blaster tucked into the holster at his side. He was no fool to walk around armed but I couldn't be sure if it was carried as a deterrent or if he knew how to use it effectively. I filed the fact into the back of my head. A sneer tugged at my mouth, as I locked eyes with the man again. "So who are you supposed to be then?"

"I am Bentre Stahoes." He said the words with no particular anger or malice, but spoke them with strength and authority. "I wanted to meet the Bentre who was."

This took me back a bit. "Bentre who was? What are you *karking* on about?" Anger was starting to creep into my voice now. "I have been Bentre since my naming day. Where do you get off, buddy?"

The man looked sideways, his mouth moving silently as though in thought. This went on for several moments. He appeared much as he felt in the Force, turned in upon himself. He seemed very inwardly focused, but his mind did not seem to be shielded. I began to consider if I should attempt to probe his mind through the Force. It wouldn't be anything that could really do any damage, or would be all too noticeable. I just wanted to give it a poke and see what would happen. The temptation was there, but as I reevaluated my surroundings I decided against it. I would want a place where we had plenty of time for something like that.

"Your parents never told you what happened neither, did they?"

A deep laugh bubbled out from my throat at these words. "I doubt there is little that my Mum and Da' haven't told me." I winced slightly. The twang of my home was coming out now more than it had in months. Corellia and home had been so far from my mind, outside of the sessions in the Sadowan dungeons.

"Don't feel too poorly about it, friend. They didn't really tell me a whole lot either."

He spoke these words in deadpan. It took three heartbeats for their full implication to become evident to me. I shook my head. This didn't happen in real life. These were not some sappy holos where long-lost siblings met after many years apart. That was purely fantasy.

"You and I were not the first ones to bear the name either, brother. There was a Bentre before us. The first Bentre was the true Bentre."

"You are full of poodoo." There was no kindness in my words. My patience was growing thin now.

"I assure you, I was no happier when I discovered the deception either, Bently." There was a measure of sorrow in my supposed-brother's eyes. "Mom and Dad brought me up believing I was an only brother. They told me that I had two brothers who died before I was born. The sad thing is that I really believed it."

"So where were you when I was growing up 'bro'? Were you hiding in the closet while my parents tucked me in at night?" My tone was pure mockery at this point.

"I stayed for a time with our aunt. Well, the woman said she was my aunt. A lot of the things that they told me never quite fit together though. It seems like I was kept in the dark a lot over the years. It was only by doing a bit of my own searching that I found out this much. The kicker is that our folks aren't even the people they claimed to be back when you were home, Benny."

"You have no right." My words were just above a growl. "Do you really believe with everything the galaxy has taken from me you are going to take my name from me? Are you going to take

my identity now?" This so-called-Bentre's whole countenance fell. He looked at his feet, carefully considering his next words.

"I wanted to bridge the gap between us. I wanted to try to undo the damage between us. I wanted to get to know the brother that I never had the opportunity to know. I wanted to uncover the truth. I wanted for the two of us to be a family."

"No thanks. I already have a new family. I mean, yeah they are a bunch of wicked back-stabbing cut-throat *schuttas*, but they have been more family to me than you or my so-called parents."

"Please, Bently, just hear me o-"

"No thanks. Get lost. As they say back on Ryloth, *Sahak Chir* buddy."

"Brother, please listen! It's not my fault they did this to us. I am even willing to forsake my name. You don't have to go by your birth name. I just don't know what else to call you."

My lip curled back to expose my teeth. "Get it through your thick head, *nerra*. I am Bentre. Have been and always will be. You can come to me with whatever sorts of stories that you like, but-

"Fine, fine. Do you have a ship or something where we can at least talk in private then? I feel like I at least owe you the one thing that Mom and Dad never gave either of us. I owe you the truth. If I can give you that, then I will drop the rest. You will take the name of Bentre Stahoes and I will disappear off into the galaxy, never to bother you again."

After a few moments of thought I nodded. "Fine. We will go back to my freighter and you get to tell your tale. If at the end of it I cast you out, you best never show up on my cargo ramp again. You can ask my wife, I am not kidding when I say that either."-

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We took a lot longer talking than I realized. My parents had moved from Coronet shortly after I disappeared. By the time my brother had come back to them from our "aunt's" home, they were already re-located to Selonia. He had been fed a story about how my father's contract had expired. They had promised my brother they would be a family again. He had been called Bentre for years with no realization that I had existed.

It wasn't until he was an adult, and a few records of my exploits had cropped up. Thankfully, it had been nothing more serious than my own actions on Nar Shadda for the most part. Such things showed up as what he had assumed were anomalies. However, the picture that was revealed as he dug deeper was a little more disturbing. My actions were more seen than I had ever realized.

It was my last trip to Corellia that had very nearly brought us into contact. He had been in the city for work and apparently the old lady in the apartment block had reported me to local law enforcement. He had been stopped and questioned for an hour before they finally released him. That is when he had began his own probings. He had done some smuggling on the side of a rather humble shipping enterprise and wanted to know who it was that was bringing him undue attention. He thought it was an angry former client.

Several months of inquiries later, he had tracked sighting and movements. I had underestimated the footprint that Naga Sadow's operations had left. By following the movement of cargo and personnel out of Core Space he had a rough idea of where I was. From there, he put some considerable time, effort and an admirable amount of skill to narrow down his search. It was upon his discovery of Sepros that he put out the a probe to find me. His original message had been sent to a former Dlarit asset. From there it had found its way up to me.

There were tears and hugs. He swore that nothing would drive us apart. I felt my own eyes become wet. The frustration of many years, thinking I was unloved by my own kin came pouring out. I choked back a sob as I planted the emitter of my lightsaber against his side. He didn't feel it until the moment that my weapon activated with a snap-hiss. Shock filled his eyes, followed by pain

It didn't take long for him to die though. The effect of contained plasma on the human body is pretty intense. It had to be done though. He was leak and thus had to be plugged. I would hear no more of this nonsense. There was one Bentre now. It was as it always had been. Silent tears fell on he still form as I held my brother.

There were times I hated what I had become. To be a Sith was to forsake weaknesses. Why then did it hurt so much. I am unsure how long I knelt there, rocking his cooling body in my arms. If only he had stayed away, if only he had carried on with his life and left things well alone we both could have been spared. Another Bentre would have walked the galaxy, and another Stahoes would have had a chance at real happiness.

My sobs could not drown out the reality of my deed. That day, Bentre Stahoes had died. He had been killed by my hand. There was one task still left to me now. I would have to return to Sepros. I would drag the answer out of one or both of my parents by whatever means necessary. They needed to answer for their part in all this. If only they had told the truth, perhaps my brother could have been spared. His blood was on their hands as well. I was going to make them answer for their part in all this.