

Kendra Icasta stood fast, she glanced down at the trail she had picked up after a Brotherhood shuttle had been shot down. Her orders were to capture survivors and to bring them back to the Collective unless they were a high ranking individual, then her orders were to deliver them to Rath Oligard himself. The pilots of the shuttle had perished in the crash but there was evidence of one occupant and they were wounded. A bloodied uniform jacket with an Admiral's insignia was ripped and discarded in the passenger compartment. Whomever had survived was a high ranking member of the Brotherhood and a glorious prize for the Collective. This was a prize Kendra was going to collect. Night was fully in control by this time and the wind began to pick up and howl. She was on the edge of the Badlands and knew that her prey was injured, tired, and didn't know the area. After she double checked her surroundings she lowered herself to one knee. She dabbed her finger into small pool of liquid before raising it up to her eyes and moving it between her thumb and finger. *Blood*, she thought. She was on the right track. She smiled before pulling out her commlink and updating the rest of the Shikari of her location and what she was tracking. She placed her commlink back on her belt and stood. She knew she was close and with that, she continued on.

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Hades continued to limp as far away from the crash as he could. The gash in his left forearm had continued to bleed at a decent rate, but the Tarenti Admiral hadn't bothered to dress the wound. He knew he had to make it to the cave system if he had any hope to survive the night unscathed. As he topped a small rise he barely made out an area that seemed darker than the rest of the next hillside in front of him. In what little light the stars provided Hades had made his way down the rise and over to what indeed turned out to be a cave. The cave system had an extensive work up in the Brotherhood's reports of the area and this cave opening matched his intel perfectly. He stole a glance behind him before he darted inside.

The cave network was impressive but Hades recalled his briefing and began to run down the main cave past several branches that forked away both to the left and right. After the fourth branch to the left he took the next right and continued on for another 80 meters. He wiped the sweat from his brow, but as he did so he did not see a large rock at his feet and tripped, falling to the ground. He cursed to himself for not paying attention. He laid there for a few seconds in chaste before he rolled over on his knees and stood, continuing on his escape. He had to make it just a little further inside, just another one hundred meters until he could rest. He suddenly froze, he reached out with the force and his senses as he slowed his breathing. There, a small repulsor motor behind him some distance back. He cursed to himself as he recognized it as some type of droid motor. Probably the seeker droid. Hades by then had started to run. He covered the last hundred meters quickly and found himself in a large chamber perhaps thirty meters long and fifteen wide and being twenty meters tall. One large rock guarded a single passage that led further into the system on the far side. The near side had four additional caves converging on the chamber. He made his way over to the large rock and sat down to catch his breath.

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*There*, she thought as he seeker droid had confirmed her target was located inside a large chamber just ahead of her. He was resting on a rock on next to the rear exit of the cave. She ordered her droid to the mouth of the cave system in order to transmit her location to her Shikari. Her prey was hers for the taking. She crept up to the corner of the cave and had confirmed her target was alone. She readied her repulsor dart shooter and selected a slow acting poison that would knock out her target without them suffering any damage. It would take half a minute for the poison to work, just long enough for her to gloat over whomever she had caught. She loved the little things.

Kendra aimed carefully at the man's center mass and exhaled slowly. The target looked up at her suddenly. His eyes went wide and raised his hand up as if she would stop. She didn't. The dart was away and the man yelped and fell off the side of the rock. They cried out in pain which to Kendra was like wrapping herself in a warm blanket. She checked her corners and behind her before she moved towards the writing man. He was older, human, slight greying around the temples but fit for his age. He was wearing the trousers of some sort of imperial officer which confirmed this was the Brotherhood Admiral she was chasing. The cut on his arm only sealed his identity. She lowered her DE-21 slugthrower at his midsection.

"You are now a prisoner of the Collective." Kendra said to the man in a velvety voice.

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"Yeah, that's going to be a no." said a voice from behind Kendra. The huntress spun and fired at the location of the sudden intruder. A quick snaphiss of a lightsaber and a flash of red met the slug and turned it into nothing. Two red lightsabers were aglow at the mouth of one of the caves on the far side of the room where Kendra had entered but above two meters higher. A male human held the blades which gave his face an erie glow.

"Oh, a Sith. I get two for the price of one. This will be a glorious day, indeed." Kendra began to prepare herself for a fight before another voice echoed from a different passageway.

"How about two Sith?" A third red lightsaber ignited in a second cave, this one to the left of the one she entered. Kendra gripped her weapons and began to wargame the upcoming fight in her mind.

"Please, you are ensuring my legacy at this point." Kendra said with a smile that she did not feel.

"Then another wouldn't hurt!" A fourth red saber ignited down a third cave before a fifth ignited down another but this one yellow. A female Togrute female and a male Clawdite stepped forward respectively. The human male and an Epicanthix male also joined the other two.

Kendra knew that her Shikari will not make it in time to help her in this fight. She began to plot her escape when a sharp pain coursed through her neck on the right side. *My dart!* She spun quickly to engage her attacker but was not quick enough before the man that was on the ground had grabbed her slugthrower and yanked it out of her hands. He violently slammed her back into the

ground without touching her. *A Force User!* She exclaimed to herself. He yanked off her utility belt as the others held her arms at bay with the Force. In two seconds she was weaponless. She looked up at the man who she had been hunting with pure hatred. He grinned at her as he sat on top of her legs and leaned over near her blue face.

“Kendra Icasta. Chiss female, 30 standard years of age. Head of the Shikari Hunters. Tactically inclined. Highly intelligent and damn good at your job. I know a lot more, but that’s the jist of it. YOU are hard woman to track down, do you know that?” Kendra’s eyes and face refused to show fear, but her stomach was telling a different story. Had she fallen into a trap so easily? How? There were no other tracks, nothing on thermals. Where did they come from?! She needed to know she had failed.

The man on her legs tilted his head as he guessed at her thoughts. “Oh, you’re probably wondering how we caught you?”

He extended his hand towards the female and she produced a red stiletto. He then unsheathed it and pointed it at the inside of her left elbow. “Sorry, this isn’t this kind of Holo vid.” He then stabbed her through her elbow. He quickly repeated the maneuver on her right elbow. He jumped up and proceeded to stab her through both knees. The Huntress screamed in pain. She was now completely disabled in every limb.

“You will never be the same again. You will not lead your hunters. You will not hunt members of the Brotherhood. You will be useless to the Collective. You have nothing to look forward to. You are worthless. Except, maybe to us.” Hades, the Sith Battlelord and Admiral of the Tarentum Navy stood over his prey and smiled.

“You will serve the Brotherhood until you die.” He glanced at his apprentices, Warlord Scion Altera and Warrior Solas Night-Thorn. The other two, Solas’ apprentices, had already secured the Huntress in stuncuffs and additional restraints. Solas hoisted the prisoner on his shoulder after they had stopped her bleeding.

The group made their way out of the cave system they had studied carefully. Hades turned to their prisoner and patted her head. “Don’t worry, as I hear it you might have a few of your Shikari as cell mates. This is a lucky day, indeed!” The Sith laughed and walked on ahead.

Their plan to capture the Huntress Kendra Icasta had worked flawlessly. They knew she would focus on the hunt, but also she would pay attention to the trail left by Hades. So they crashed the shuttle and Hades cut himself so he would leave a bloody trail. The trail he left was exactly what an injured man would leave, the Admiral’s jacket was just to incentivize Kendra’s search. They knew that Kendra would want this target at all costs. As the team exited the cave system Hades looked up at the Assault Transport as it towered over them just ten meters away. As soon as the ramp lowered the team rushed their prey inside. Within ten seconds the ATR was on it’s way spaceward to the *Titan*. Sith Bloodfyre will enjoy making this Chiss talk.

\*SBL Hades #8596