**An unexpected opportunity**

**Augur Xantros**

**11518**

**36 ABY, Ragnath, Caperion System**

Xantros moved slowly through the plains of southern parts of continent of Maqor. The primary stage of the battle between the forces of Clan Scholae Palatinae and the army of the Meraxis Empire was located almost fifteen kilometers away to the west, but the Duros was not interested in taking part in the massive extermination, as he had another task to complete. While he had been on a mission to assassinate one of the officers of the Meraxis Empire, he had encountered a few troopers wearing armours with familiar insignia. They belonged to the organization that the Dark Jedi Brotherhood had been waging war against for several months – so called the Collective, a union of three powerful organizations that had decided to remove any Force users from the Galaxy. Their presence in the ranks of the Meraxis Empire meant that those two parties engaged into an alliance against the Dark Jedi Brotherhood, the Imperial Clan in particular. They had to die along their new allies, who stood on the way of Clan Scholae Palatinae to conquer a new world that would serve as their new home.

Hidden among the shadows, Xantros utilized his abilities to convince a soldier of the Collective to tell him more about the leader of the Collective forces. It turned out to be a tall, lean human with brown hair, brown eyes and several cybernetic implants that improved man’s sight, hear and strength. He was in his thirties. He was said to be a middle-ranked officer – important enough to carry out a vital mission like supporting allies, but not important enough to receive any substantial forces to aid the Meraxis Empire. He was probably meant to provide advice on tactics of the Imperial Clan and to slow the pace of the invasion. Still, he could be a useful source of information about the Collective and its operations in the nearby areas of the Galaxy, including Ragnath itself. Knowing the location of the Collective encampment, the Augur decided to extend his mission, in order to capture the enemy officer and to bring him for further interrogation.

Soon, Xantros reached the surroundings of enemy camp and noticed it. He utilized the Force to hide his presence from the members of the Collective. Luckily for him, none of them, apart the leader himself, were using any kind of cybernetic enhancements nor any other equipment that would let them notice the intruder. After several minutes of looking around the base of operations of the Collective, he found his target, who was discussing something with a low-ranked member of the Collective. The Duros hid behind a large pile of rocks in the middle of the location, in order to hide his presence from the enemy officer and to give him enough time to focus on the mind of his target.

Half a minute later, Xantros heard the Collective officer saying, “I will go for a patrol to check the state of all our outpost. I will go alone, I do not need any assistance. Remain in the camp and return to your duties.”

Still utilizing the Force to mask his presence from the sight of the Collective officer, the Augur slowly followed his target, carefully watching out not to attract attention of his target. Despite the fact that it was a very demanding and exhausting challenge, he managed to force his prisoner to walk away couple of kilometers away from the camp of the Collective, where there was no one, who could help the human. Xantros pulled out his BlasTech DH-17 Blaster Pistol and, dropping the Force camouflage, shot twice into man’s knees. The human fell on the ground with loud scream of shock as the blaster shots fried his skin and cybernetic implants causing hardly bearable pain. The officer of the Collective was effectively rendered unable to move, to run away and to pose any threat to the member of Clan Scholae Palatinae. Looking at the man lying at his feet, the Duros called for a team to secure and transport his prisoner. Now, he only had to wait for the pick-up, so he smiled with satisfaction. Another mission completed with a great success than he had before expected. He would have rarely wasted such an opportunity to achieve as much as he only could, if he had not found an obstacle that would be able to stop him.