

Selen
Estle City
Sinchi Ring, The Pub

The Pub sat quietly in its sidestreet, to the regular of the small bar it was just another day in the City. Outside, fires, smoke, sirens, shouting. People were rioting in the streets, screaming about the Citadel and the sickness that had only just been dealt with. To Pops, who sat in his comfortable, overstuffed chair near the entrance to The Pub, it was all a bunch of poodoo. The Citadel had dealt with the plague, they'd dealt with the people trying to murder all of them time and again. Yet food was short and now the people were angry.

Didn't make no sense to the old man. He sat quietly, nursing a glass of whiskey to one side with a scattergun laid across his lap. Behind the bar, his great-grandson Bront wiped a glass clean and looked over the small selection of patrons they'd attracted. It was mostly an older crowd, watching the holoscreens or just staring into their drinks. It was darkened inside, only the hanging lamps providing illumination. Steel shutters had been lowered over the windows outside, Bront having hung a sign across one of them assuring the neighborhood that they were open.

Sound grew outside, shouting, chanting, someone leading a march through the Sinchi ring again. Pops shook his head and sighed. People were damned fools. They all should have been home, or out helping rebuild. Instead they were raising hell and causing problems for those who were trying to put the City back together. The old man looked up, eyes narrowing behind his thick glasses at the sound of the front door rattling.

It swung open, banging against the wall and allowing a trio men with cloth over their mouths to step in shouting.

"Down with the freaks!"

"Frak the Citadel!"

"Selen for Seleni—"

Pops's scattergun fired into the group, the salt rounds peppering the group and causing them to shout and scream in pain.

"Keep your damn revolution outside! People are being decent and drinking in here! Now get!"

Bront moved from behind the bar, a truncheon in hand.

"Citadel loyalists!" screamed one of the men, blood seeping from wounds across his arms.

"You'll get yours when the castle falls!"

"We ain't loyal to nothing but our trade and customers, boy! Now get your tails outta our bar! You wanna come in here you take off them damn masks and have credits in hand!" stated Pops, reloading his scattergun. Bront lifted his truncheon and took a threatening step forward when the protestors regained their feet. "Pops said get! That means get! And don't think I don't see you there in the, Garron Fauw! I'll have words with your dad when he comes in later if you don't get your friends here gone!"

The named boy grabbed his colleagues by their shirts and began dragging them back through the door. When this failed, he pulled his mask down and off.

"Didn't mean no harm, Bront! Don't tell my dad, please? I'm sorry! We're sorry, uhh, yeah! Sorry, Pops! Forgot we had our masks on still, is all!"

The old man leveled his scattergun at them and squinted. "Sorry, hearing is going, did they say they wanted another shot, Bront?"

"Oh kark this," stated the boy in the lead, turning and pushing past his friends. The other followed, leaving Garron standing with his mask in hand.

"Sorry," muttered the boy, turning and running out the door.

"And shut the damn door!" shouted Pops.

A few seconds later came another mumbled apology as the door was closed by a sweating, nervous looking Garron.

"Buncha damn fools," muttered Pops, sipping at his whiskey.