

Kordath Bleu yawned, sipping his caf as the night air wafted in through the window of the office. He wasn't clear what time it was at this point, the chrono on the wall was too far away to properly focus on anymore, the numbers going hazy. In front of him, close enough to at least be readable, was the dispatch from the Voice.

He snorted, a half-hysterical sound with his fatigue. Sleep had been scarce with the troubles in Estle City, not to mention out in the wilds. And now Marick bloody Tyriss was declaring war on the Collective. He wondered if this even mattered to his people, they had troubles enough at home. Then again...

Bleu glanced out the window, trying to imagine that the columns of smoke that made hazy lines in the sky were from merriment. There were still isolated riots across all three Rings of Estle, fueled by discontent, hidden enemies, and...the Collective shipwreck survivors. After his predecessor's stance towards the Dark Council and Iron Throne, asking for Brotherhood aid at this point would be like slapping Atyiru's legacy in the face. He had enough problems sleeping without his dead friend's disappointed face staring at him in his dreams.

Another sip of the caf, grimacing at the coldness that had taken the drink, he debated. On the one hand, the Council getting off their arses and standing up to this enemy. On the other, would this mean the new Grandmaster would try and tighten his grip on the outlier Clans that were as yet undecided on their stance towards his new regime? Widespread chaos presented new opportunities for Arcona, of course. Throwing the Collective into disarray would make them less an individual danger, and giving the various Clans a common foe meant more conflicts could be ended with words. The constant threat of suicide bombers and other dirty tactics would keep even the most ardent of warhawks silent.

He leaned back, setting the mug down and leaving the dispatch, forgotten for now. Every Collective raid on the farms around the city drew out the problems within Estle. But every strike was giving them more intel on how the irregulars worked, how they thought, planned. Even the where and when was giving them information about where they were coming from. They'd retaliated not a month ago, a concentrated effort to wipe them out that had ultimately failed. They'd been premature in their attack on the Collective remnants. Qyreia was ready to put a blaster bolt through his chest at this point from the orders to hold and observe, fight back if they got too close to the city. He didn't like giving the command, but the DIA had advised him, and he'd seen the reasoning behind it.

"If we capture some of them," he mused aloud to himself, "turn them over to the so-called 'new' Inquisitorius, perhaps..."

He shook his head, amazed he was debating the idea of gaining favor with those who'd ran the purges for the madman Pravus. They couldn't stay at odds forever, though, so perhaps it was a good way to open dialogue between the no-longer covert group and the Shadow Clan.

"One less open hostile would be a bleedin' relief. Can nae tell Satsi, o' course, she'd punch me inta next blasted year."

He rubbed at his eyes and sighed. Opening better relations with the Council would take some of the pressure off of them, some of the constant press of paranoia. His fist tightened. It also meant dealing with Tyris. Perhaps he could go through Ventus, at least he and Atra's dealings of the less than legal nature gave them more common ground.

At least Ventus hadn't killed one of the few Arconans he'd had some respect for.

"I need a karkin' drink," grumbled the Ryn, standing from his seat and swaying. "Ooooh boy..."

The Shadow Lord wavered, exhaustion washing over him, before falling face down on the floor. Or rather, one of the many exercises pads his faithful and attentive bodyguard had been surrounding the Ryn's desk with ever since the first concussion had nearly broken the man's nose. As darkness closed in, Kord decided he'd send the order. Tomorrow. Tomorrow they'd try to start taking Collective agents alive as barter chips.