

The green blade that had briefly illuminated the dark, wet cave had been recalled into its weapon. Deep crimson blood slowly began to seep into the frozen soil, though it was flowing out much faster. A pair of boots came crashing down into the red puddle. They belonged to a shadow known as Marcus Brutus, and they were in quite the hurry. He knew that in a mere moments, the cavern floor would be crawling with creatures that are attracted to the scent of any blood, let alone the sweet taste of Pantoran blood.

It had been eight days since the Voice of the Brotherhood issued a blanket call to arms amongst the ranks of the Inquisitorius. While he had previously appreciated and excelled under the secrecy behind the organization, the time had come for drastic steps to be taken in order to secure the safety of the Iron Throne and the Clans. The loss of Clan Tarentum meant little to the Savant, but he was able to understand that it was causing momentum to build for the enemy. An Elder had once warned him of the importance of momentum and to never underestimate its power. Marcus Brutus had long worked under the cloak of concealment that was provided by the Inquisitorius, but also through the help of a Commander within Clan Plagueis. For rightful reasons, Brutus was not entirely welcome under the banner of the Clan, but felt close enough to Gaius Julius Caesar to trust that he would be taken care of should the need arise.

Brutus' descent onto the surface of the unknown freezing planet had cleared his mind of the pain that his befriended Plaguein was suffering during his planned capture by Collective forces. The Savant became at peace knowing that the plan was working. His assignment lead him to the far Outer Rim to stalk a band of Technocrat thieves. For as much as they claimed to hate Force users, they sure did love to collect their tools and artifacts. Under orders of their disgusting leader, Daggo Mouk, a squad of hunters had been dispatched to steal a Nightsister Dagger that had been acquired by Commander Caesar. Knowing that the weapon would be stolen, Marcus Brutus was assigned by the old man to follow it at all costs. He was hoping it would have been taken somewhere warmer.

*"The Pantoran has been eliminated"* the shadow spoke into his wrist as he ran through the tunnels, though he was certain it wasn't going to be picked up by anyone. He was unaware of any other agents on the planet, let alone this sector. Much to his surprise, a response was received, an unfriendly one at that.

*"He meant nothing to me, Brutus."* the speaker emitted. The effeminate voice caught the Savant off guard. He embraced the thoughts circling his mind pointing to it's identity, the huntress Kendra Icasta.

Brutus slowed his pace, knowing that he was being tracked regardless. The creatures of the cave had made their way to their prey and were no longer a threat. It wouldn't be wise to waste his stamina on running anymore. He knew that his unique skill set granted him safety from much of whatever Icasta brought with her, but it would require his concentration and determination to remain alive. The Savant called through the Force to approximate the location of his tail.

Though surely she was not alone, she was the only sentient presence other than the creatures that made their way to their treat.

He slowly made his way through a set of tunnels that remained preserved by darkness, ever cautious to conceal his movements. The ground suddenly shook with the power of a large herd of nerf, pieces of rock fell from the ceiling violently crashing down on the Savant. He was able to shake off the larger pieces, but still was battered by the barrage of rock. He would bet an entire yearly salary that one of Icasta's landmines had been tripped pretty near to his location. The loud noise and pressure of the blast hit him as he tried to regain his concentration.

*"Wasn't me,"* the man uttered into his wrist, *"better luck next time."* He gripped his head in defiance as he pushed his back against the dark cavern wall. He remained still, waiting for the next blast. Sure enough, the boom and shaking returned, though Brutus was able to guide any heavy projectiles of frozen rock away from him.

*"How about that time?"* came the reply of the freckled Chiss. She sounded pleasant.

*"Negative, ghost rider."* Brutus smirked.

Regret came over the Savant, as he had sent away the shuttle that he had arrived in. As he had limited ties to Clan Plagueis, or the Brotherhood as a whole, he was on his own to make it out of the cave alive. Even at that, he was sure that the leader of The Shikari would have any exit covered by a skilled marksman who was equipped with any tools necessary to detect the Savant's presence. Shelter in place was the method he had settled on.

Guided by the Force, Brutus covered himself from sight, and cut off his presence to any other Force users. Inside, he felt angered that this situation was the consequence of Master Tyriss' decision to move the Inquisitorius out of the shadows and onto the offensive.