

## Arconan Blacksite

Selen

37 ABY

Agent Kryvico had done it now. He knew he'd screwed up big-time and there would be no getting out of this one. And the worst thing about it all? It had been his hesitation that had brought him into this mess. Always his stars-damned hesitation.

He'd hesitated to put his all into that jump and knocked down the bar. He knew he could have made it, but he'd hesitated and with that single *\*clang\** of a toppled bar had gone his hope of becoming an athlete.

That had been years ago, back when life was simple. Back, when he was barely a fresh-faced Rodian out in the school yards of Vulus. He'd had his first crush there too, a girl a year older than him named Nimosa. He'd wanted to ask her out, but he'd hesitated then too. Always hesitated, thinking he'd find the perfect moment.

Nimosa went to graduation with Tayg, his Human bully. He hadn't hesitated at all, and he'd taken his girl, as well as his dignity.

Kryvico reckoned that was when it all started going down hill. First came the anger, then the depression, then the suicidal thoughts. But he'd hesitated even then. Not even daring to put that blaster to his head and end it all...

Then he'd found hope. An insidious a drug as spice was, *hope* was even more addictive. And the men and women of the Collective were drug peddlers of the highest order. He could see it now. They offered hope to those in need of it, even when it was but an empty and hollow hope. A fool's hope, that would only lead them to a shallow grave.

Much like it had led him.

Not even then had it been the last time he'd hesitated. No, he'd balked at life's demands time and time since then, until finally, he'd been in that blasted meeting room, ambushed by Arconan Jedi scum and hounded into a corner. His friends had taken their pills, crying, proud or with a curse on their lips. But they'd still taken theirs.

He'd hesitated, for one moment too long.

And now, he was here. In this empty cell, waiting for a cavalcade of horror that would break his body and spirit as they demanded access to the information he still held within him. He would resist, of course, because what if he did not? The Collective's response would be terrible and he would never see another sunrise if they knew he'd cracked.

But.

What of it?

What did it matter? To someone who'd lost it all already, and was too cowardly to even take his own life? What *\*else\** could the Collective possibly take from him? Why was he scared? Why was he *\*hesitating\**?

Agent Kryvico shook his head in dismay. Was this the end? Most likely. No matter if he spilled his guts or heart, it didn't matter. He was dead either way and he knew it. Even as the lock to the interrogation room whirred and clicked, he made up his mind.

He would *\*not\** hesitate. Not anymore. He would tell them what they wanted to know and damn the consequences. If he was to die, he would do so with at least *\*one\** moment of fortitude to his name.

The door slid open and a purple hued Twi'lek stepped inside. She gave him a cold smile and said: "Tell me everything."