

RUNNING WITH THE PACK

Defining Moments Competition

Fiction by

Battlelord Takagari "DarkHawk" KogaRyu

Aspect: Assassins Creed

Wild Space

Shaevalis Prime

Low Orbit

The VT-49 Decimator, callsign "Tārōn" came into view from out of the depths of deep space. The gleaming sunbeams bounced off the solid black paint scheme of the Decimator. The planet spilled into the flight deck through the main view ports of the flight deck.

"Shaevalis Prime, this is Decimator Tārōn requesting clearance to Palace docking bay four. Transponder codes open and active..." the Duros pilot said.

"Decimator Tārōn, transponder codes received and approved, you are clear to land at designated LZ. Arrival Party is in place."

"Arrival party?" Tytus exclaimed elegantly.

"Yes, Ty, when I sent our flight plan ahead before we left the Perdition, the Grand General was pleased I would be arriving. So today is your lucky day Ty, you get the royal treatment."

The Duros just glared at his old friend. "Your pun and sarcasm is very unwarranted and you just suck at it." Tytus said in proper condescending tone.

DarkHawk expelled a simple sigh as he got up from the co-pilot seat. Leaving the flight deck he never looked back as he spoke. "Put her down with style Ty, but no showing off!" he scuffed, emphasizing the last bit.

"Don't worry princess, I will make you look good for the dog and pony show.." Ty replied.

Tytus maneuvered the Decimator with surgical precision as it cut through the planet's outer orbit and broke into the lower atmosphere. The humidity blanketed the lush green mountain terrain. The fast moving river below flashed moments of its

tenacity across the large rocks nestled within its depths. The river flowed directly into Shaevalis City. Ty dipped the Decimator into a gorge and streaked across the river sending a plume of water trailing behind. One hand on the yoke and the other on the throttle quadrant, Ty pulled back on the yoke and pushed the throttles forward. With small adjustments to his yaw and pitch, the Duros executed a vertical barrel roll with the ship as it crested out of the gorge.

With the city in sight, the Royal Palace stood out from its perch in the center of the city. Ty moved in from the southeast and lined up with docking bay four. As he had many times before, the Duros made the landing look like a leaf gently dropping to the surface. The pitot tubes expelled the ship's excess gasses as the cargo door opened.

Royal Palace

Shaevalis City

DarkHawk disembarked his ship first followed by his trusted pilot Ty. Making his way directly towards Grand General Shemus Bloodfyre and his beloved wife. Surrounding the royal party stood a dozen towering native Royal Guards of the Shaevalian Defense force.

The General met the Quaestor with a broad smile and open arms. DarkHawk and Tytus both dropped to one knee paying respects with proper genuflection. General Bloodfyre laughed as he pulled Takagari up to him and embraced his brethren.

"Ahhhhh Takagari, it is so good to see you!" the General exclaimed as he patted the Quaestor on the shoulders.

"As it is to see you General...it is always good to be back." replied DarkHawk.

DarkHawk directed his attention to the Queen, kneeling once again, "Your Highness, it is always a pleasure to be in your presence..."

The raven haired Queen elegantly moved to her kneeling parishioner, "Come now child, you of all people know there is no such need for these formalities. Though I suppose the more I remind you of that, the more you're intent on continuing." the Queen said as she cupped Takagari's face in her hands.

"You look tired child, your rest is long overdue." the Queen spoke softly.

"Come Takagari, we have yours and Ty's chambers ready and dinner will be served within the hour." the General said.

“As you wish General..” Takagari said.

“I do indeed my boy! Tytus I hear your a very adept card player. I have a very lucrative card game planned tonight, I would like to see those skills of yours in action. One of the Senators needs a lesson in humility, he cannot stop boasting about the credits he took from me last month. You can clean him and the others out if you like, that is...if your skills are as good as Takagari here says they are. I would just like my winnings back before the night is over.” the General said with a confident grin.

“General it would be my pleasure to correct this gross act of what I could only define as a blatant impropriety.” Ty said with confident sarcasm.

Laughing from deep within “Your right Takagari, he is a smartass!” the General boasted.

The General continued his laugh as he grabbed his bride’s arm and tucked it under his. The Royal party departed and headed along the cobblestone pathway towards the castle.

DarkHawk and Ty walked behind the Royal party, DarkHawk folded his hands behind his back, seemingly deep in thought.

“So you make it habit of discussing colleagues with the General?” Ty asked.

“We exchange stories from time to time Ty, I try not to make you a main topic of discussion.”

“Thanks clown shoes, oh and by the way, don’t think I am not aware of the fact, that is not the Royal Family!” Ty said, whispering the last bit.

DarkHawk smiled as the two colleagues continued to walk. “Ty, nothing gets past you does it? Just so you know the Queen is the daughter of the Royal family. The Royals are very reclusive and do not ever leave their sanctuary. The General has absolute rule. Besides the Royal family are all evil dark magic practitioners and hold an unbending grievance against the Duros race. By my account, your once again in my debt...” DarkHawk stated.

“I hate you...” Ty said through clenched teeth.

Stopping and turning towards his friend, “Ty, I have one demand of you for tonight, play your game, string them along until you procure the General’s winnings. After

that clean them out...Mind your manners, especially that tongue, pay your respects...and no cheating what so ever...Savvy?" DarkHawk said.

"And if I choose otherwise?" Ty replied.

"Then I will personally escort you to the sanctuary of the Royal Family and let them have their way with you."

"You would not dare..." Ty exclaimed.

DarkHawk stood emotionless, glaring at his bald friend.

"I still hate you..." Ty whispered.

Royal Palace

Shaevalis City

Dinner was filled with laughter and boasts of conflict victories. Ty was deeply engrossed in conversation with the commander of the Shaevalian Defense Force star fighter group. Their hand motions mimicked those of dogfighting star fighters.

The Grand General's lieutenant's all inquired in on the spoils of war during the recent Great Jedi War. Luckily for the Collective, their reach has not come close to the borders of Wild Space or Shaevalis Prime.

The servants attended to their guests seated at the Royal table. As they cleared the table the Grand General stood and spoke. "Friends, it is good to break bread with all of you, now may we move to more pressing matters, let us move our festivities into the casino and try our hand against lady luck."

The dinner party all roared in joyous jubilation and began to disperse from the formal dining room. General Bloodfyre's bride grabbed Takagari by the hand and then the hand of her groom. She elegantly walked them to one of the large balconies adjacent to the formal dining room. She spoke in such soft tones, "Takagari, the General and I know your here to find some shred of inner peace. I also know how that word has such disdain meaning for you. But we both can see the turmoil you hold inside. You must find a release, you must learn to control your hatred, channel it until it manifests into a weapon of power. Much like your saber, your hatred can pierce the strongest armor."

The General spoke next "Takagari, you are always welcome here, you are family. But you will not find the peace you are looking for here within these palace walls.

Especially not with drink, nor within the casino. We have taken the liberty to provide you with something else that I believe may be more fitting.”

Takagari had a confused look upon him, “I will do as you command my Liege.”

“Good, we have a shuttle awaiting with a small team of the Royal Guard to escort you to the north along the river and deep into the forest. In your chambers you will find, my beautiful bride has commissioned her seamstresses to make you a more... appropriate attire for your journey.” the General said with a smile.

“More appropriate Sir?” Takagari asked.

“Indeed, there will be no use for your attire or your tools for what you are about to embark on.”

“I do not understand General...what is it am I about to do?”

General Shemus Bloodfyre carried a concerned look about him, he placed his hand on Takagari’ s shoulder, “It’s long overdue Takagari, you will run with Stalkers, learn to hunt and track once more. Let the stalkers free your turmoil, learn from them, watch them.”

DarkHawk’ s eyes widened. Onyx Stakers were the apex predators on the planet. Much like wolves and large feline species they run in packs, they are relentless trackers and precision hunters.

The Queen grabbed Takagari’ s hand once again, “Your stalker has ascended to the Alpha female of her pack, she has cubs of her own now, she also has her own mate...”

“Let me guess, he is the Alpha...? Takagari asked.

The General slapped Takagari’ s shoulder, “And a big one, magnificent creature. One of the largest I have seen in years.”

“Are you sure she is mine your Highness?”

“I am. She bares the blaster mark above her shoulder. I asked the General to keep a close eye on her all these years.”

One of the few memories Takagari has of his childhood is of those Onyx Stalkers. It was a long time ago, Takagari was still a toddler, leaving the sanctity of his parents lab, and without permission. Young Takagari wandered off into the woods and came across a young female Stalker cub. The two bonded almost immediately, possibly

the first manifestation of the future assassin's ability of creature handling with the aid of the Force. Unknowingly to both, the cub's mother watched very intently, hidden until she was ready. Takagari was found by his parents security team shortly after his unauthorized walk. They came upon the two playing, that is when the mother Stalker made her move. Protecting her young, she decimated the guards before they could get any closer to her cub. When she turned her attention towards Takagari and her cub, a shot echoed through the forest. The shot bounced wide but ricochet off one of the thick ironwood trees and ran across the young cub's left shoulder. The cub hissed in fear, the mother Stalker made her move and bolted towards her cub. She picked her cub up in those massive jaws ever so gently without hesitation and raced deep within the forest.

"I thought she would be dead by now." Takagari said.

"Far from it my boy, her pack is strong, she returns to that spot with her cubs as her mother brought her, seek her out, run with her pack Takagari...run with your Stalker" replied the General.

A bit of restlessness brewed inside the Dakhanian. "Go Takagari, we will see to things here and we will see you upon your return." said the Queen.

DarkHawk bowed in great respect. "Thank you..." Takagari said.

Standing back upright the Equite turned and began to leave. Two of the Royal servants joined him and led him out of the dining room and back to his quarters.

The General walked in from the balcony screaming for the Duros to join him. The Queen simply smiled at her betrothed as she followed the boisterous men laughing telling tales once again of past exploits.

Takagari returned to his room to find some very ornate robes draped across his bed. He ran his hands across the smooth material, not wanting to disrespect his hosts he disrobed his Dark Age Sith Armor and adorned his newly acquired robes. A black and gray form fitting sleeveless Kendogi with split toe tabi boots. Two very beautiful kukri knives with sheaths laid underneath the clothing.

Takagari smiled...

Shaevalian Forrest

Northwest of

Shaevalis City

The transport stopped along the riverbank, one of the Royal guards exited and pointed towards a pathway that led deeper into the forest. DarkHawk nodded and walked down the pathway. As Takagari descended deeper into the forest, a dilapidated structure overgrown with vegetation stood to the left, broken visions filled his head as he walked past. The only complete vision was of the front of the structure... "A *laboratory*..." he thought to himself. The other was the large ironwood tree that he and the Stalker cub were discovered by.

The forest was thick with dew and the onset of humidity, it felt like rain, but with the time for seasonal changes was setting in, you never know what you could get from the planet's somewhat unpredictable wet weather.

The tree came into sight as Takagari rounded the corner of the path. Kneeling down and feeling the soil he looked for tracks, only old tracks were present. DarkHawk did not want to second guess the General, maybe it was just another Stalker with a similar scar. Perhaps from a fight defending her status of being the Alpha, or how she obtained her spot in the hierarchy? Stalkers don't normally kill the matriarch they dethrone, but it has happened from time to time. After all, they are vicious predators, it would not be uncommon.

The forest became deathly quiet, DarkHawk scanned the area putting his eyes on a pivot from left to right. Slowly putting his right hand on the hilt of his kukri sheathed on his outer thigh. Stealthily DarkHawk moved further down the trail. The thought of taking to the trees entered his mind, though that would be a total disadvantage as Stalkers are expert climbers.

A low deep growl echoed, DarkHawk knew that sound all too well. A glimpse of movement within the brush was gone as soon as it appeared. He was being flanked, the hunter now the hunted, he was surrounded. Making a point to scan the trees, Stalkers were notorious for that kind of attack, those being hunted have a tendency not to look up until the last minute. Not seeing any movement or shadows within the dense tree foliage, DarkHawk temporarily put his back to the big tree in front of him.

The growls became more frequent, DarkHawk tried to pinpoint them all, it would be easier to say where they were not. To the left, the tip of a bushy tail crested the ceiling of the ground coverage. DarkHawk's head whipped around to follow the movement, once again his hunters were nowhere to be seen.

The waft of hot breath against the back of his exposed neck was a strangely unfamiliar feeling to DarkHawk. Slowly turning his head back to the right, he was nose to nose with a very large Stalker. It's lips curled as it exposed its large fangs, the creatures intense yellow eyes locked onto DarkHawk's. Its claws digging into soil as its shoulders crouched. Immediately DarkHawk rolled forward, in the midst of his evasion he unsheathed his kukri. Rolling to a stop, DarkHawk was up on one knee, holding both knives in a reverse grip, one arm forward, one arm to the rear. The large predator centered itself on its prey. Moving more out front, DarkHawk could see the size of the beast, Tipping the scales easily over two hundred kilos.

The beast began to pace, first moving to its left, almost as if it were sizing its prey up, challenging for an attack. When it veered back to the Darkhawk's left, its exposed left flank displayed a bare mark where no hair had grown. Almost like a blaster trail. More growls could be heard from the rear, carefully and slowly he twisted his torso just enough to see the two Stalkers behind him.

"Great..." Takagari thought to himself. Reverting his attention back to the Stalker to his front, their eyes locked. The deep yellow eyes of the Stalker seemingly pierced right into the Sith's consciousness as the stare down ensued.

DarkHawk cleared his mind and steadied himself. Reaching out to the Force, he called out to the beast. Like visible tendrils, the reach of the Force leapt from Quaestor's hand and into the beast's own consciousness. The Stalker shook its head violently as it rejected the unwelcome visitor. DarkHawk took another deep breath filling his lungs with air. Keeping nothing but the beast in focus, DarkHawk cleared his mind further, concentrating even harder on the projection of two infant cubs playing harmlessly together all those years ago. He moved his hand in rhythmic motion, much like that of a snake charmer.

The Stalker emanating its growls and hisses louder, trying to decipher these strange images it was now being flooded with. Her pacing picked up, DarkHawk kept his train of thought steady and true, *"It is me girl, I do remember you..."* his words floated from his consciousness to the Stalkers. Her three tails flickered back and forth, her movements were apprehensive, her crouch lowered and she took two very cautious steps forward towards the Sith. *"Yes, it is me girl, I mean you or your pack no harm, I am just here to see you old friend..."* He could feel his words reaching her, her underbelly just barely hovering above the ground as she moved. DarkHawk stayed stoically still, keeping all his attention on his Stalker at the front.

DarkHawk kept his words floating across the bridge of the Force continuing to solidify the connection. She was within inches of his outstretched hand. He extended his index finger as it barely grazed her snout, she sniffed profusely taking in the Sith's scent. Her ears laid back for only a moment, recognizing the scent.

Her nostrils flared as she took in the scent of the kukri blade, Another low growl and a display of fangs pursued. "It's all right girl..." DarkHawk said aloud and he made the decision to drop the knife from his hand. The blade stuck into the soil and the Stalker quickly dropped back away from him. Maintaining his connection with her, DarkHawk immediately did the same with the second kukri. A loud roar bellowed from the left deeper within the forest. "Great..." DarkHawk said.

"Ok girl, now or never, it is me, I am all yours, take me if you must, but I am that boy from that day long ago." he said calmly. DarkHawk dropped to both knees placing his hands out in front of him, exposing himself at all sides. Keeping his eyes locked on her she moved with the same apprehension until her snout sniffed his head. Nudging him over and over DarkHawk slowly lifted himself from the ground. She moved in closer, DarkHawk was up on his knees at this point and the big female was crouched between his legs. Slowly he ran a hand over her flank, she flinched initially, but DarkHawk calmly stroked her coat, Running his fingers through her pelt and over the blaster burn. Her breathing began to relax and her audibles changed from a low growl to deep purrs. DarkHawk continued to stroke her pelt, maintaining the image of a boy and a cub sitting harmlessly in the dense forest.

He could feel her acceptance as she moved in close to him. Now laying flat on her stomach, she nuzzled her snout deeper into DarkHawk's abdomen. He stroked her entire left side as she leaned into the gesture. Her cold snout ran across DarkHawk's face as she continued to sniff his scent. A semi-rough tongue licked his cheeks. Suddenly she popped up to all fours and spun around shoulders dropped ready to strike. There by the tree, it must be the Alpha of the pack. The male Stalker was enormous, almost twice the size of his old friend in front of him. Her tail's twitched in his face as she growled and hissed at the big male. He made a couple of aggressive gestures toward them, but the Alpha female cut off his efforts. DarkHawk debated on whether or not he should pick up the kukri, but that would break the trust he just solidified.

The big male roared and continued his stalking maneuvers around them. The big female returned a growl of her own. Almost as if she was saying this one is mine. The big male leapt back into the brush and moved his patrol to their outer perimeter. The Alpha female spun back around and nudged her human companion. "Thank you" DarkHawk said. She rubbed her snout across his cheek, she made a few rapid chirps over DarkHawk's shoulder. More chirps from behind could be heard, then suddenly two more shadows came up from both sides. Two adolescent cubs began to sniff DarkHawk's head and shoulders. The two cubs were at least two seasons old, and judging by their size, they were very healthy.

DarkHawk slowly raised his hand toward one of the cubs, stroking its pelt and a quick scratch behind the ears. The cub tilted its head in satisfaction with the gesture,

then quickly ran off into the woods. DarkHawk looked around and all the Stalkers had left the area except for the Alpha female. She put her head in the middle of his chest and pushed DarkHawk over to his back. With her front paws on his shoulders, she stared down at him, rocking back and forth against him. DarkHawk reached out again placing his hand across her face. Clearing his mind and connecting that bridge again with her again. The only image he could see was that of a big stagg, and just like that the Stalker darted off into the forest.

Shaevalian Forrest

DarkHawk quickly picked up the two kukri's and ran in woods in pursuit. He could feel the Stalkers all around him, the two Alpha's, two cubs and three more mature adults. They were on the hunt. DarkHawk sprinted through the bush, bouncing off downed ironwood logs as well as their erected counterparts. Jumping from branch to branch and running down the stems of the large diameter boughs.

The cubs kept to his right and DarkHawk could see their tails moving through the thick bush. Pausing for a moment, Takagari reached out yet again to the Force and felt for his Stalker, she was on the move she had a scent. Dropping down into the green foliage, DarkHawk searched for any signs of tracks other than the Stalkers. The big male had been through here, he must of locked in on the scent first. There near a red berry bush, a hoof print, the stagg was also on the run.

DarkHawk moved swiftly in the same direction as the hoof prints. Coming into a small patch of infant iron wood trees, being that most ironwood trees are hundreds of years old, these infant trees could not be more than ten to twelve years old. Broken limbs about two and a half meters up, suggested the stagg came through here, a mature male for sure. He may possibly give one Stalker a good run, but not the pack.

DarkHawk raced forward. He knew what he had to do, he had to reach the stagg before the pack. He had to make an offering in order for acceptance. He could feel the primordial rage of running free with the Stalkers and he succumbed to that feeling. He could feel the blood flowing through his body, that feeling of unadulterated freedom washed over him. The hunt was all that mattered now.

Springing off one of the large tree branches, DarkHawk snagged a vine and swung across the large gap between the two boughs. Then quickly scaling the trunk up higher to get a bird's eye view. Making his way to the narrow part of the branch, he could see the stagg heading northwest, while the Stalkers were coming up from behind the stagg and closing in from the east. Brilliant, the Stalkers to the rear of the stagg are pushing it right towards the Stalkers to closing from the east.

DarkHawk grabbed another vine and slid down until he let his body drop to the ground. Before he broke out into a sprint, Takagari called upon his Force cloak ability and slowly faded away from sight. Keeping his mind clear DarkHawk began to race through the forest headed towards the stag, Only having a small lead on Stalkers to the west DarkHawk wasted no time closing in on the stag. The stag instinctively knew it was being hunted, but only by the Stalkers.

Racing through the forest Takagari movements looked similar to translucent shimmer breaking through the foliage. The stag veered to its right and into a small clearing. It stopped pointing its head up in the air, flaring nostrils to obtain a scent. It was not expecting what came next.

The shimmer of light came racing to the clearing edge. DarkHawk launched himself into the air, breaking his connections to his Force cloak. His knees to his chest, DarkHawk unsheathed the kukri from their sheaths. Takagari's arms outstretched as he came down upon the stag, it reared back on its hind legs as he drove the kukri's into the lungs. It bellowed in pain as DarkHawk buried the knives to the hilt. One of the stag's antlers pierced his shoulder when it reared back. The sheer strength of the stag threw DarkHawk from its back, slamming him to the ground.

DarkHawk shook his head trying to regain his bearings. That purest feeling of the hunt continued to pump through his veins. He forced himself to his feet, the stag careened in circles before dropping. Takagari watched the stag and the life leave its body. The euphoria of the hunt slowly began to subside, DarkHawk knelt beside the stag pulling the kukri's from its body, The hair on the back of his neck began to stand up. DarkHawk twisted around only to be nose to nose with the big Alpha male.

"Come on" DarkHawk said aloud. The male Stalker roared, it was deafening to say the least. Not even considering dropping the knives, he was pretty much a goner at this range. His shoulder was dripping blood soaking his outer robes, The smell of fresh blood was all the Stalker could sense. If the beast moved, DarkHawk considered putting the blades into its neck.

DarkHawk could see movement from his peripherals, The female Alpha approached and sniffed at the stag's corpse. She turned her gaze on her Alpha and roared at him. The big male and DarkHawk never took an eye off one another. DarkHawk tried to make a connection with the male but the Stalker's conscious was very strong and kept breaking the connection. The female Alpha moved in and sniffed at the wound on Takagari's shoulder, she licked the wound and nudged her head into his. She moved in closer to her male Alpha and did the same. The two growled at each other momentarily, then the female Stalker rubbed her body against her mate, purring as she pushed her body into his. The big male finally relaxed enough to sit, his mate came

back and turned her attention back to Takagari. She nuzzled him, before she began licking the wound. The big male dropped his shoulders a bit, snarling and exposing his fangs.

“I promise you friend, I am no threat to you or your pack...” DarkHawk said. The female Alpha continued her endearing movements between the two. By this time the entire pack was present and waiting to feast on the kill. DarkHawk looked around, he counted over a dozen Stalkers,” Well holy shiza girl, you have done well for yourself haven't you?” he said while gingerly scratching her ears. The big male began to push his snout into DarkHawk's chest. Repeatedly he pushed Takagari back closer to the stag.

The only thing DarkHawk could sense from the pack, is that they were waiting on him, it was his kill. Takagari slowly moved beside the stag and then plunged one of the kukri blades into its belly exposing its entrails. DarkHawk reached up inside the stag's chest cavity and felt for the heart. Carefully cutting it away from its bed, he pulled the heart out showing it to the pack. They whined in almost an adoring cheer. DarkHawk presented the heart to the Alpha, he once again approached slowly. The Alpha put his snout under Takagari's arm and nudged it closer, it was a kill offering. DarkHawk did not hesitate and took a bite out of the heart.

The female Alpha began to howl and the others followed suit. DarkHawk held the heart in both hands and extended his arms towards the Alpha male. He sniffed at the heart, looked at Takagari and then snatched it out of his hands. Gobbling its rich nutrients in one bite. The Alpha then moved beside Takagari and began feasting on the kill. The rest of the pack joined in on the feast. They gorged themselves on the big stag, and DarkHawk felt it was time to leave them in peace.

Takagari got up to his feet, sheathed his blades and began to head out. The Alpha female gently grabbed Takagari's hand in her massive jaws. He knelt down in front of her, fresh blood dripping from her snout. He reached out to her once again, “*I have missed you so much girl, I promise I will be back to visit. In the meantime, protect your pack, and yourself.*” She nuzzled his face one last time before she returned to her feast. The Alpha male stood next to him now, DarkHawk held up a hand and the big male touched his snout to Takagari's bare hand and returned to the stag.

Shaevalian Forrest

River Bank

DarkHawk emerged from the forest covered in blood. The Royal Guard never uttered a word nor showed any expression. Once on board the transport it raced back towards the Royal Palace.

Almost a day had passed since he first left the palace. Upon arrival at the palace, General Shemus, his bride and of course Tytus. The Duros eyes widened at the sight of his good friend. Covered in dried blood almost entirely from head to foot, DarkHawk exited the transport and into the welcoming arms on Grand General Bloodfyre.

“Ahh, I see you exceptional hunt Takagari!” said the General.

“I did my Liege.” DarkHawk said.

DarkHawk approached the Queen and dropped to one knee, “Your Highness…”

The Queen ran a soft hand through Takagari’s matted hair. “Oh young one, are you injured? I presume you found your Stalker?” she asked concerningly.

“I am and I did your highness. Though I do have a request if I may be so forthright to ask of you both?” DarkHawk asked.

Both the General and the Queen nodded in agreement. “By all means Takagari, ask what you must.” said the General.

“She is in the northwest quadrant near the big river bend, by the old building in the woods. Could you make safeguards to keep her safe, no hunting, no trapping. She does indeed have cubs now, her and the Alpha do have a strong pack. I would like to come back to visit her more, with your blessing.” DarkHawk said.

“Is it just the Stalker you wish to visit child?” asked the Queen.

“Your Highness, no one can come here without being blessed by your grace. I am far from being immune to that extending that courtesy, nor would I ever disrespect what you and the General have done for me all these years. But that Stalker…”

“Takagari, rest assured child, your Stalker will live out her years in peace and safety, you will always have a place here amongst us.” replied the Queen.

“Do not worry Takagari, as you ask, I will make it so, her and her cubs will be able to roam as freely and safe from harm, this I command.”

Takagari, bowed paying his respects. “Come lets us get you cleaned up before we dine shall we?” boasted the General.

“Yeah DH, you look and smell like the backside of a rotted out Bantha corpse” Ty said holding his nose and wafting the air around him.