**Coruscant**

**37 ABY**

Karran hated city-planets. But he had his orders. This was a hunt, and he was a hunter. He had not, however, hunted in a ferrocrete jungle.

Val’teo looked down at the planet from the pilot’s chair of his shuttle as he steered the ship in for a landing at their approved docking bay.Upon landing, the Zabrak stood up and made his way to the passenger compartment. Yezid Kal’dor, Karran’s Miraluka apprentice stood upon sensing his master enter. Challadan did the same.

“Yezid, I want you to attempt to sense our quarry.”

“Yes master, as you wish.”

The Miraluka bowed his head and reached out with his mind, seeking their target. After a moment, his head snapped back and shouted in pain.

“There is...too much here master. All of the life, it’s blinding. I’m sorry.”

“It is alright, Yezid. I suppose we will have to do this the old fashioned way,” the older Sith clapped a large hand on the apprentice’s shoulder. “Challadan, are you ready?”

“Yes, sensei! We shall find this scurrilous coward and bring him to justice.”

Karran walked to the bay door and pressed a button. The doors gave a hydraulic *hiss* and slowly opened. The trio walked down the ramp into the hangar before being intercepted by a dock official, a Twi’lek with blue skin, and a Coruscant Security officer.

“Hello and welcome to Coruscant. According to your credentials, you are here on diplomatic business with the… Dark Brotherhood?” the dock official swallowed hard, “and as such the standard docking fee has been waived. I have been instructed to act as a liaison and make sure that your every need is met.” The Twi’lek’s voice was unnecessarily proper, as if in an attempt to impress his “diplomatic” charge. It would seem the falsified documents provided by the Inquisitorius had done their job

“Very good. Yes, I have been sent here to pursue certain interests of the Brotherhood in a peaceful manner. However, right now, we have eaten nothing but protein paste for our entire journey. Where might we find a local watering hole to refresh ourselves and find a solid meal?”

The dock officer looked from side to side before leaning in, “Well… you didn’t hear it from me, but the red light district has some amazing restaurants, drinks, and...entertainment.”

The Sith Knight smiled and nodded at the Twi’lek, “I shall keep this in mind.”

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Karran took a seat next to his apprentice at the bar in one of the less reputable-looking establishments in the red light district. Challadan had been stopped at the door by a bouncer.

“Master, how exactly are we supposed to find our target here?”

The Zabrak scanned the room, observing the dancers, drunken patrons, and seedy smugglers before looking down at Yezid, “Hives of scum and villainy such as this are invaluable for seeking information. You can find anything you need, for a price.”

“*Achute*, what can I get you?” the Devaronian bartender leaned against the counter, his voice carrying a thick accent.

“Two drinks, some food, and information. We are not particular on the food and drink, but we do need some very specific information.”

The Devaronian pulled up a datapad and punched in an order. “The drinks and food will be twenty credits, the cost for information will depend on what you need to know.”

The Sith swiped his credit chip and leaned in, “I seek a Twi’lek by the name of Manu Maurfai.”

The bartender ran a hand along one of his long horns, “I may have...a hundred credits may help me remember better.”

Karran leaned back in his seat and slid a credit chip over. The Devaronian swiped it for verification. Satisfied, he smiled and leaned forward, “Big, fat fellow, yes? Green skin? He’s a regular here. Always goes into the back room for the VIP entertainers. In fact I just saw him go back there. He’s probably in room twelve.”

“I appreciate the information, my friend.” Karran stood up, followed by Yezid, and made his way toward the back room. He pushed back the curtain to reveal a long hallway. The walls were draped with deep red velvet curtains and wood framed doors were lined by paper, allowing silhouettes to be seen on the other side. He found door twelve and put a hand on it.

“Yezid, can you sense him? Try once more, but focus your search to just behind this door.”

The Miraluka nodded and bowed his head again, placing a hand against the door. Reaching out to just beyond the barrier. After a moment, he raised his head and looked up and nodded at his master.

“Very good. Stay here. If he tries to run, stop him.” Karran slid the door open and stepped through, closing it behind him.

The sight he found in the room was not one that he had expected. Manu was in just his underclothes, a tight, white fabric garment and a blindfold. His hands were cuffed behind his back and a metal collar was affixed around his neck. The other person in the room was a Zeltron woman in tight spandex with a whip in her hand.

The Zeltron’s eyes went wide with fear as she saw the Sith step into the room. Karran quickly put a finger to his lips, signalling her to be silent. He waved her out of the room and she quickly complied, dropping the whip. Karran stepped forward and picked it up.

“Oooh, my darling? Why have you stopped? I paid for a full hour, surely time hasn’t gone by that quickly.” The large Twi’lek looked around the room blindly, unable to see the Zabrak in the room.

Karran approached his target, gripping him by the lekku and shoving him off of the bed onto the floor. “I am afraid your time is up, Manu.”

“What?! Who’s there? Where is Mistress Chichi?”

Karran shoved the corpulent Twi’lek over onto his back and placed a boot on his throat. The Sith leaned over and removed the blindfold. “My name is Karran Val’teo, and I am here to capture you.”

From outside came the sudden sounds of blasters firing and a lightsaber activating. Karran hoisted his prisoner over his shoulder and barged through the thin door, lighting his own saber.

At the end of the hall, three men with blaster pistols fired at the pair of Sith. Yezid held his ground and deflected the bolts as best he could. Karran placed himself between his apprentice and their assailants, summoning a barrier and providing his apprentice with cover. The young Miraluka vaulted over his master and charged at the men, channeling the Force into his legs to provide a burst of speed. Yezid sprinted down the hall, dodging to the side as he leapt off of the wall and stabbed the first man through the chest before passing by the other two.

With the other two men distracted, Karran threw his lightsaber down the hall. The blade spun like an arcing red disk, cutting through a second man. The final attacker turned his attention back to Karran, only to be struck by an electrostaff. He stiffened for a moment and collapsed to the floor. Challadan emerged into the threshold of the hallway.

“Sensei, thank the maker I was able to save you.”

Karran chuckled and hung his head, “Thank you, Challadan. Yezid! Take Challadan and commandeer a speeder, we must return to the shuttle!”

“Yes, Master!”

Karran knelt down to inspect one of their assailants. He fished a datapad out of the dead man’s pocket. After a moment of sifting through the information on it, he found that these men had been guards for Manu.

Yezid turned off his saber and ran outside, followed by the IG-100 droid. After a quick scan of the surrounding area, they ran over to an empty speeder parked outside of the bar. The Miraluka jumped into the open top and started the engine. The vehicle hummed to life and lifted off of the ground.

Karran soon joined his companions with their prisoner in tow. He unceremoniously dumped the half-naked Twi’lek into the back seat and jumped into the passenger seat.

“We should depart. There is no way to know who will come to investigate this commotion.”