

The Hive Mind marines had been tearing up the station. All was smoke and chaos, with blood and cybernetic parts being scattered across several corridors. Still, Cimozen needed to push forward. He needed to ignore the stabbing pain in his chest as he ran. His lungs craved oxygen, but his visions had been clear. He had seen ruin befall the station. He had seen the abominations wrought by the Collective. He had seen the suffering of the Brotherhood and of the Naga Sadow clan. He had a part to play that day.

A black-armored humanoid stood between Cimozen and his fate. This Collective would fall as had so many before them. There were far too many treasures to be lost here. He did not need the fool Consul or the Shadow Academy to outline the importance of historical artifacts. It was a shame, really, that the only way to preserve their past was to bring others to an abrupt end. The Force Disciple ignited the green blade of his mass-produced lightsaber, and watched his opponent.

*Perhaps one day, there will be some pretense or illusion of true peace.* The sound of a thermal detonator hitting the ground offered a moment of distraction. The dark-haired man backpedaled quickly. As much as he hated to show cowardice, as much as he wanted to allow both himself and his opponent leave intact, the Sadowan knew it was not practical. Although the Augur cleared the immediate range of the explosive, he knew he was offering his opponent an opening. The Hive Mind soldier tilted their head back as their blaster was lifted with both hands and leveled at the Force Disciple.

The lightsaber was not going to be a practical long-term solution. Blaster fire filled the air in a cluster even as the explosive detonated. Pieces of shrapnel struck him, but Cimozen's body still turned with natural grace, bringing the lightsaber up in a series of blocks which turned away the deadliest of blaster bolts. The attack was going to force the Sadowan back. His options would be cut short. He was going to have to push back.

"Ah hah!" The Sadowan dropped the lightsaber to the floor plates with a loud clang. This did not prompt a notable reaction from the armored Hive Mind marine as Cimozen drew his slugthrower and fired. The slug struck the chest plate with a crack. The armored being looked down at the chest plate. A notable dent was present, but the tilt of the crimson-visored soldier silently registered curiosity rather than confusion or pain.

"You have chosen badly." The Corsair chuckled. "If this is the best that you can offer." The clank of boots echoed from behind the Augur, causing the hairs on the back of his head to stick up.

"Perhaps I am out of options." Cimozen spoke slowly, trying to lock eyes with the being hidden behind the Purge Trooper armor's visor as his fingers slipped to his side. "Maybe we are all doomed from the beginning." He primed the thermal detonator connected to his side. "Perhaps I am a fool. It could be that the Collective have had it all right from the beginning, you know?" He counted down in his head, ready to drop the explosive. "Wouldn't that be a kick in the head?"

As he spoke the last word, Cimozen Kurios released the explosive, allowing it to drop to the floor plates. The marines were close enough that they should be caught in the radius. At this range, they also could not miss him though. Perhaps, this day was going to be last. Perhaps this whole operation was a fool's errand.

*Perhaps, he mused in that last moment, the Clan will get the staff and Headmistress to safety.*

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