A sharp noise rouses Qormus out of his sleep. His quarters were dark except for the soft glow coming from a nearby sensor readout. Mirella stirs next to him and rolls over, “Good morning.” She said, “Time to get up already?”

Qormus yawns and sits up on the edge of the bed, “Unfortunately, yes. I hate early mornings.” He said in reply. Standing and stretching tired muscles, he heads to the refresher.

When he comes out, Mirella has already gone back to sleep. He smiles at her blissful expression. Grabbing a robe, he heads to the exit of their quarters.

The door opens as he approaches causing Qormus to jump as he sees his Imperial Security Droid, Scourge, standing there waiting for him.

Qormus grumbles softly and not wanting to wake Mirella, stalks past the droid. The droid’s head swivels to follow Qormus before turning to follow him.

When Qormus is safely out of Mirella’s hearing range, he turns to Scourge, “Scourge, how many times have I told you not to wait at the door like that?” He asks the droid, feeling only a little annoyed.

“You have instructed me not to do this 147 times.” The droid answered.

“So why do you keep doing it?”

“Because I want to.”

A grunt of laughter erupts from Qormus as he takes a seat, “Very well Scourge, give me today’s schedule.”

“We’re due on Pantolomin to meet the informant in approximately two hours. You have allotted several hours after that to evaluate their information. And this afternoon, the ship is due for its regular service back at Aliso.”

Qormus yawns and leans back in his chair, “Ok Scourge. Get the ship ready for launch and instruct the computer to take us to Pantolomin, best possible speed.”

The droid disappears around the corner, and Qormus grabs himself a hot drink and some food for breakfast. The deck plates begin to gently thrum as the engines spool up. Finishing his breakfast, Qormus cleans up the mess and heads to his dressing room used to store their various uniforms and other articles of clothing.

He grabs one of the clean uniforms and hangs up the robe before putting it on. He grabbed his police badge and affixed it to his chest. Giving himself a once over in the mirror to make sure he put the uniform on correctly in his still slight sleepy state, he exits the room and heads to the cockpit.

He enters just as the ship lifts off the ground and accelerates. Qormus takes his seat in the pilot’s chair and fastens the straps.

The bright red sky slowly fades to blackness. It takes several minutes for the vessel to move outside of the planet’s gravity well, but before too long the vessel rotates to its intended course. The stars turn into bright lines as the ship enters hyperspace.

“The estimated time of arrival is 90 minutes.” Scourge said from his console behind Qormus.

“Thanks, Scourge. I am going to take a short nap. Let me know when we are close to Pantolomin. Oh, and be sure to wake Mirella when we are 20 minutes away.”

“Affirmative.”

Qormus rests his head against the headrest of his chair and closes his eyes. He sits there for a moment as sleep slowly takes him.

The feeling of lips on his own wakes him for his sleep. He smiles and opens his eyes to Mirella, also clothed in her uniform, “Good morning.” She said, smiling.

“Good morning,” He returns the smile.

Mirella takes her seat in the co-pilot’s chair and fastens her straps, “How long until we arrive at Pantolomin?” She asks.

“Three minutes and seventeen seconds.” Scourge said behind them.

Qormus rubbed his face with his hands, trying to shake himself to full wakefulness.

“Sleep well?” He asks.

“Not as good after you left,” She replies, smiling.

“Coming out of hyperspace in five, four, three, two, one,” Scourge says, interrupting them.

The star lines return to pinpoints as the ship exits hyperspace, the cockpit filled with the view of the beautiful ocean world of Pantolomin.

“Scourge, I have given you access to the specifics. Scan the island near the north pole and look for the beacon broadcasting the specified frequency.” Mirella said.

They look at a display showing them a map of the planet. It zooms in on a small island with a soft blinking light.

“There it is,” Qormus said.

“Affirmative,” Scourge confirms.

“Very well, take us down.”

The ship enters the atmosphere of Pantolomin, the planet's ocean stretching from almost horizon to horizon. The target island comes into view after a couple of minutes. The waves begin to go by a little slower as the ship begins to slow.l

“Scourge, find us a place where we can put down,” Mirella instructed the droid.

“There is what appears to be a small landing zone near the western shore,” Scourge said after a moment of silence.

“Understood. Once you have confirmed, put us down,” Mirella said.

Scourge wordlessly went about his duties.

The vessel came to a stop above the tree line, and shifting to the side slightly, disappears behind the foliage. Lowering the ramp, Qormus and Mirella disembark from the vessel and survey their surroundings.

“He is close by,” Mirella said.

Qormus closed his eyes and took in a deep breath. Releasing it, he opens his eyes and nods, “Yes, I sense him too.”

A short, nervous-looking man emerged from the trees. He looked from side to side and then at the ship and its occupants.

Qormus walked towards the man with Mirella alongside, coming to a halt a short distance away. He looks the nervous man over and hrmphs in disappointment; Such a pathetic and nervous person.

“You are Wiral,” Qormus said to the man, more as a statement than a question.

Wiral shifted uncomfortably as he looked between Qormus and Mirella. He nods slightly, a sheen of sweat on his skin.

“And you have information for us,” Another statement.

Wiral nods again and offers Qormus a data padd.

“Y-y-yes, it is all here.” He said, clearly terrified.

Qormus eyes the data padd, and then Wiral. This makes Wiral increasingly nervous who begins to shrink backwards. Before he completely melts, Qormus steps forward and takes the offered data padd. Keeping his eyes fixed on Wiral, he offers the data padd to Mirella.

Mirella takes it and attaches a small circular device to the device's screen. Tapping a button, it begins whirring as it performs some function. After a moment, it emits a soft beep and after nodding in approval at the results, removes the device and hands the data padd back to Qormus.

Qormus takes it and taps on it the screen, examining its contents. Finding what he was looking for, opens it up and reviews the footage.

A video begins playing that shows a human male, laying on what appeared to be a metal deck, his legs and feet bound with some kind of rope. Black fabric tied around his face obscuring his vision. At first, Qormus wondered if the man was dead but realised that he was very much alive as the man squirmed against his restraints.

At the corner of the video feed, Qormus sees a small metal and wood frame with a creature on one of the limbs. Examining it closely, he spots another frame on the opposite side of the man.

“Very good, Wiral. This is what I had been hoping for. Now, how did you come across this information?”

Wiral went pale. He thought he had done what he had been asked to do. He didn’t know he would have to answer more questions.

“H-how? S-s-sir, my master instructed me to come to this planet and give you this information. I don’t know how my master acquired it.” After some initial trouble, the words came out in a rush. Wiral’s voice trailed off as he feared what the reaction to his statement might be.

Qormus remained silent for a moment, stretching out with the force to confirm the statement’s authenticity. Satisfied with Wiral’s honesty, Qormus continues.

“And your masters name?”

“Minorlan Detrimomar, sir.”

Qormus nods, seemingly satisfied with this response.

“Excellent Wiral, you may leave. Please pass along my thanks to your master. She will receive payment via the usual means.”

Wiral bows deeply before Qormus, “Thank you, sir.”

Without meeting his gaze, Wiral backs away from the pair and once in the apparent safety of the trees, turns and scurries away.

Qormus chuckled to himself and turned to Mirella. The pair began walking back to the ship.

“So, they managed to capture a Jedi? How are they holding onto him?” Mirella asked.

“It would appear that Minorlan knows about Ysalamiri.”

“What? I wonder how.” Her voice trailed off as she contemplates the implication of a crime boss not only understanding the sessile creatures’ effects on force users but also knowing where the creatures can be found.

“Yes, I am curious about that too. Once we have taken care of the Jedi, I think we will need to visit Ms Detrimomar. We shall see just how much she knows, and then we’ll decide if we need to liquidate her and her organisation.”

“Qormus,” Mirella calls to Qormus. They stop at the base of the Ascend’s boarding ramp, and Qormus turned to face her.

“What is it, Mirella?”

“I have a bad feeling about this. There is more to this story, I can feel it.”

Qormus nods, “Yes, I can feel it too.”

“So, what are you going to do?”

“There isn’t much to do, Mirella. We will forward this information to the Dread Lord and await her orders. In the meantime, we shall stay here on Pantolomin and meditate. Perhaps the force will provide us with the answer.”

Seemingly satisfied with that answer, Mirella nods and walks up the ramp into the ship. Qormus follows her, and hitting a button, causes the ramp to rise, sealing the ship.