

The deck rumbled beneath Qormus' feet as his ship, the Ascend, touched down on the landing pad. After touchdown was confirmed, he initiated the shutdown sequence. Leaving the computer to handle the rest, he rose from his pilot's chair and stretched his tired muscles. It had taken almost a full day to return from Dandoran, but Qormus had been unable to sleep.

He exited the bridge of his ship and grabbing a caf from the galley on the way, made for his quarters. The door slid open, and he crept in, thinking his partner, Mirella would still be asleep. She wasn't asleep though, instead, she was sitting at the small desk located to one side of their cramped quarters.

She looked up at him and smiled warmly in greeting. He returned the smile and offered her the cup of caf that he had got for himself.

"Thanks, but I'm fine, Qormus." She said, leaning back so Qormus could see the steaming cup that she got for herself.

"Ah, I didn't hear you get up." He said.

She smiled and spun in her chair to face him properly.

"No, I don't suppose you did. Ever since we left Dandoran, you've been off in your own little world."

Realising that he had been neglecting her since the events that almost got him killed a couple of times, he crossed the distance to her and embraced her.

"I'm sorry, Mirella. I'm just tired. I promise I'll get over it soon." He said softly into her ear.

She let him go and moved back so she could look into his eyes.

"Qormus, it's ok. I know what you went through. You take as long as you need."

He looked into her eyes and smiled. He knew how damned lucky he was to have Mirella.

"You bet your ass you're lucky to have me." She said, laughing after sensing what he had been thinking.

Qormus burst out laughing as well and squeezed her shoulders before letting go and sitting on the bed next to her desk. She sat back down as well and leaned over to grab her cup of caf.

"Now that we're back on Aliso, what are your plans?" She asked him.

"I have to meet with the Dread Lord later this morning. I also have some House duties to attend to. Later on, the Hands are getting together for a debrief. At some point, I need to find the time to talk with my Ventress. Some of us fought for a different side, so I need to make sure there are no issues reintegrating." Qormus replied.

She nodded thoughtfully and took a sip of caf. Sitting the cup down on the desk beside her, she spoke.

"I think that is really important, Qormus. I have seen what happens when ill feelings are left to fester. It can destroy entire Clans if left." She said earnestly.

Qormus knew this, of course. They had already had this conversation, and both were in total agreement.

"Agreed. I will round them all together as soon as I have finished with Selika." He said, assuring her.