

TuQ'uan paced to and fro inside the di Plagia lounge hidden deep within the Pinnacle, muttering incoherently to himself as he went. Normally someone who thought of himself as calm, cool and collected under pressure, the Kel Dor was currently emanating an aura of anxiety that was on par with giving a speech in front of the senate and realizing you had shown up nude—which in his case luckily hadn't been in front of the senate.

The soles of his black leather boots clicked away on the stone floor in front of the roaring flames that burned away within the large fireplace. TuQ'uan loved this place. It was quiet and he could get away from his regular responsibilities. He loved to come down here, sink down into one of the massive brown leather throne-like chairs that currently faced him and get lost reading for hours on end. But tonight, he found himself unable to settle down, unable to stop himself from wearing a path in the floor continuously going back and forth. Back and forth. Back. And Forth. The light from the fire casting his long shadow across the room, swinging like a pendulum.

"TuQ!" Alaris snapped. "For the love of the Force. SIT DOWN!"

Obeying his Proconsul's order, TuQ'uan dropped into one of the reading chairs and let out a deep sigh. Alaris sat in the chair opposite him, a drink in one hand and a book in the other, his red eyes glared at the Kel Dor. Since TuQ'uan had entered the room, Alaris had successfully read a total of three pages and reread his current page at least four times.

Tap, tap, tap. The toe of TuQ's shoe bounced repeatedly off the ground. Exasperated with his fellow di Plagia's behaviour, Alaris downed his drink and closed his book.

"Look," the Twi'lek's voice softened a touch. "I know this is important to you. I don't know why. But it is. And worrying like this isn't healthy, and more importantly, isn't going to help.

"I've faced my fair share of obstacles over the years. I've seen friends killed, I've seen my enemies take power. I lost my only friend and both of my parents when I was still a child. I had to lift myself out of poverty. But I endured. I kept my head on my shoulders and overcame the obstacles placed in my way.

"You and I, we aren't so different when it all comes down to it. We've both had to do difficult things and face insurmountable odds to get where we are today. Hate, betrayal, suspicion, these things are nothing new to us. We've both been Proconsul to Plagueis. We're both di Plagia. Hell, you're a non-Force user in a clan surrounded by powerful Dark Side users. You've taken on those odds and left them in the dust, that's nothing to scoff at! You have nothing left to prove to me, or anyone out there. You've earned our respect.

"This whole thing is meant to be fun. A way to relax and enjoy some light competition. I know you can kick ass, that's why I picked you for my team. *They* know you can kick ass. So go out there and do your best. But, don't do it for me, or them. Do it for *you*."

“Now have a drink.” Alaris looked at TuQ’uan’s antiox mask and realized his mistake. “Or whatever it is that you do, and relax. Because if you don’t, I’ll make sure you lose your di Plagia status and all of the benefits that come with it.”