

The wind whistled through the air along with the heavy snowfall over the blinding white landscape of Zainab. Its temperatures were always biting and frigid that left even the warmest of creatures shivering. On top of that, the rolling power outages made it near impossible to keep comms steady. Nestled within the mounds of ice and snow was a small compound that was said to have extremists of these so-called 'gods'.

The mission was to secure some intel, perhaps learn some weaknesses these creatures had. Emere Galo and Druzk Zornosz waded through the perilous weather, the saurian undoubtedly feeling the cold even through the layers he piled on.

With the break outs of fights across Selen, they were surprised by the amount of activity. Rather, lack thereof. The first home of the compound was empty as far as both of them could tell.

"My scanners aren't picking anything up, Zornosz... any luck with yours?" Emere asked, with her wrist up.

As with the Human, the Barabel had no such luck. Druzk shook his head as he tapped against the device on his wrist. "No," he said flatly. "Not picking up a karking thing on mine, either."

Emere's response to the saurian was silence. Oddly enough, the building's door opened as the proximity sensor detected their presence. Both looked at each other. Druzk was quick to unholster the DL-44 blaster from his side, pointing it ahead. After a quick glance to Emere, he took point, stepping inside.

The room was eerily dark, only lit by flickering emergency lighting. Empty. Druzk squinted his eyes as he ventured forward, deeper into the building. He stopped upon hearing Emere speak up.

"Hold on," said the woman. "Something's wrong."

"Wha—"

Druzk's words were cut off as blaster bolts lit the room red, narrowly missing the saurian's head by centimeters. "Frak!" Hissed the Barabel as he instinctively ducked down before leaping

behind a pile of crates that separated the duo and whoever—or whatever—was shooting at them.

They clung to the crates for cover, the barrage of fire sure to eventually rip through the material especially if they didn't think fast. To get a better view of what they were dealing with, Emere peeped her head from cover, only to be shot at immediately. At least now she had a direction.

"Cover your eyes," she ordered Druzk

"What—?"

Not a breath went by before she was launching a flash grenade into the direction of the fire to blind their newfound enemy or enemies. Since Druzk was behind cover, his sight remained. His patience, however, did not remain.

"Kark this," the reptilian growled before knocking through the crates into the blind blaster shots. There were three humanoid figures, their faces concealed by strange masks that were eerily similar to that of the descriptions of caxquettes. They had walked right into one of their camps. There were no questions as both the Human and Barabel quickly shot down the three zealots.

Druzk's shots with his DL-44 were intended to be deadly. Emere's were less lethal.

"Leave one alive, I have questions for... *it*," the woman said after they seemed to be incapacitated.

"Fine," Druzk snorted as he holstered his blaster to his left hip. It wasn't a half bad idea, after all. As the lone survivor moaned in pain, the Barabel made no effort to be gentle with the man as he dragged the shrieking guy into the center of the room. The saurian pressed a foot into his neck. "Shut up, would you?"

"Zornosz," Emere called out. "Enough."

The Barabel looked over his shoulder and snorted, lifting his weight off the prone being's neck. "Fine," he said flatly. The man started screaming again in pain. "I was getting tired of 'em screaming like a little womp rat," Druzk added, raising his voice so the woman would be able to

hear him. "See if you can get anything from this guy before I end up blastin' his karkin' head off so he can finally be quiet."

"P-p-please! Anything for the pain!" the man screamed. "I'll tell you what you want! Just, stop the pain!"

Druzk was unmoved by the man's pleas. "Pathetic," he snorted.

Emere cocked her head to one side and chuffed. "Don't worry. I'll make sure he's quiet."

Snatching off the awful mask revealed a frightened Kiffar. His leg was critically injured from one of their well-placed shots. Emere lowered to his level, meeting his eyes. "What can you tell me about this..." She waved her SE-14r about. "Place. Compound, whatever."

"It-it is for Mother."

"Mother? You mean Alla'su...?"

"Sh-sh- you don't want to upset her. We do not say her name. Only Mother," the man sniffled, letting out another cry of pain. "P-please! Just--"

The Human jammed the gun into the side of his temple to knock him out. Emere looked up at her scaled companion. "I have a feeling, most of them are going to be too brainwashed to give us any solid detail. He's going to bleed out and there's nothing we can do."

Druzk narrowed his eyes slightly. "Are we just going to leave--" a crack sounded out as he watched the stoic woman push her boot and all of her weight onto the now deceased man's neck. He stared for a moment before lowering to the corpses and began to search.

Emere followed suit, discovering a datapad on the Kiffar.

"I didn't expect you to do that," Druzk muttered as he continued to search, finding nothing of value between all the corpses. "I underestimated you."

“Shut up and come take a look at this.”

The tiniest grin appeared on Barabel's face, but he made sure Emere couldn't see it. Druzk stood up and headed over to the Human. “What is it?”

“Datapad.”

Druzk snatched the datapad from the Human, earning him a look of contempt. “Let me look at this,” he said, a clawed finger tapping away at the device's screen to scroll through the various pages. All ramblings of a madman with nothing coherent or useful.

“Find anything?”

Druzk turned to look at the Human. “No. Nothing. Useless.” He tossed the datapad to the floor. “What did you expect from a buncha brainwashed idiots?”

Emere scoffed at her saurian companion. “I expected nothing more. I'm ready to go home.”

The Barabel nodded. “Yeah. Me too. Gettin' real sick of this place. Freezin' my tail off here.”

“Stop your bitching and let's get moving.” Emere replied, turning towards the entrance of the complex.

“Yeeeessssss ma'am,” replied Druzk with a smirk on his face.