

# BLOOD ON THE ICE

## The Great Serpent

By Ood Bnar

Dajorra System  
Selen, Estle City

The sun was rising as the Neti stood before his target. "You've stolen something that was meant for me. I would like it returned to me, you little insignificant gnat."

"The Old God requires this item!"

Ood smiled, that was not the voice of a warrior. He was facing an intellectual. Behind the pair, the docks continued to be a hive of activity.

Could he perhaps...

Oh yes, this was going to be fun...

"Could you tell me more about these Gods of yours? Are they actual deities? What do they require from their followers?" the Warlord remarked as he calmly stood before the cultist.

As the sun rose and the city woke up, the pair continued talking, debating deep philosophical concepts. The Neti wasn't sure the cultist remembered this was a battle of wits and not a conversation with an intellectual equal. He had already used the Force to remove the item from his opponent's satchel and hidden it as they moved from the docks to a nearby coffee shop. The ritual ancient Selenian dagger was now inside a flower pot on the terrace, next to the entrance. Yet he had not yet decided whether to let this scholar live or to lure him away and kill him away from wandering eyes.

The Shadow Lord had ordered the Clan not to antagonise the Selenians. Any increase in tensions would lead to all out insurrection. This Cultist's death could, if in the wrong place or observed, ignite Selen entirely...

And thus, the debate continued on. The Equite wondered if this scholar was aware he was trying to use Cult indoctrination & philosophy against a former Professor of Philosophy or even against one of the Brotherhood's more senior and experienced researchers.

Selenian workers and students were watching in astonishment as the known cultist and the mad old tree were chatting as friends. Some recognised the cultist as a former professor at Estle City University who'd been fired from being a bit too vocal against the Shadow Clan's presence on

the planet. The final blow to his career had been when he'd been quoted as calling Selen an occupied world. Nobody knew who had made the choice to muzzle and discredit him but it had been a very well planned move.

Early morning turned to noon, to afternoon and finally to early evening as the pair kept talking, debating and arguing peacefully on the subject of the Old Selen Deities.

A waitress walked away from the table as Ood stood up, "Well, I think we'll need to stop our conversation and agree to disagree. Now, I have places to be. Out of respect for that brain of yours, I'll let you leave but you'd better hurry! I'm giving you an hour as head start before setting the security forces on you."

As the Cultist sprinted away from the shop, the Neti calmly left a generous tip on the table before wandering outside just in time to see the Selenian turn a corner and disappear from sight. Waiting another few moments, the Warlord bent over to retrieve the dagger and started to make his way back to his shuttle.