

## **A Funny Thing Happened**

Socorra #12648

**Arx**

**Throne Room**

**This Morning**

“I worked for two GMs *and* Mav. You have to do better than that.” The broken Basic and desert native accent of Socorra Erinós reverberated in the empty chamber. The Human woman’s speech dropped words and over-enunciated all syllables.

“I figured getting to live would have been good enough,” Evant smirked as he arrogantly yet casually sat on the Iron Throne with her in attendance below. The Grandmaster wore his finest linens while the Warlord wore her custom robes.

“Oh, riight...so...you know throne is cursed, yes? I always thought Ashen no sit on it because of hemorrhoids and *osik* but after I sat on it by accident—”

“You *what?*”

“Mhm. I was plague-insane. I sure you were too, Horizons and all’at. But *sah*, he said I was cursed now and that I die horrible death. By all means you do you, I just...wouldn’t.” She shrugged.

“Nothing more than foolish superstition,” Evant rolled his eyes and waved a hand.

“Kay. Moving on... will I receive complete autonomy? What about Imperium? At least partial? Full be pretty hawt. Herald Emeritus no have much authority or even sway these days.”

“I will grant you whatever you need to find Mav for me. That is your new mission...on top of the others. I hired you because you have intelligence resources *outside* of the Brotherhood, beyond the Inquisition’s reach. If you’re expecting a fleet or an army we’ll need to talk.”

“*We!!!!*. I did obtain and broker the data on Halcyon that led to the entire Brotherhood invading New Tython. It was tad more than *fleet*.”

“*And* there had *better* be results.”

“Fine.”

She whipped out a datapad and scrolled. “Onto other business, unfortunately Children of Mortis have invaded clans, so guest list going to be dreadfully small. But since Arx is clear I invited some non-Brotherhood elite from my network. I burn few contacts but you should have decent showing.”

The Grandmaster frowned. "Messing with my parties is a serious travesty. Do away with Mortis while you're at it."

She raised a brow, not entirely sure if he was serious. "I am sure Dacien has apprised you on status. Council is hard at work on countermeasures and half of Iron Fleet is—"

"Yes, yes," his hand waved flippantly. "I am so *bored* of these *Children*. Send me the 'elite' guestlist of yours and get started on finding Mav."

"Alright."

"Try again."

She almost smirked. "Yes, *my Lord*. Would you like me to bow and scrape feet as I walk backwards?"

"That will not be necessary, it would put undue stress on your pregnancy."

"Wh—"

"Which, by the way, is a detriment to your health and security so I will be assigning Royal Guards to you as well as midwife. Your entourage will be heavily screened and you will be delivering here on Arx."

"Are you insinuating that pregnancy is a detr--"

"Oh and before you go I will be requiring a hug."

*Both eyebrows went up.*

*This deal was getting worse all the time...*

**One hour later...**

"Did you know that Socorra is pregnant?"

"Who?" Dacian asked as some of the Dark Council gathered around Evant at the throne.

"The Mando woman, Erinor or whatever. Annoying accent? Former Herald? My new Praetor."

"Oh, yes I remember now. What about it?" An eyebrow raised. "Evant, you did not impregnate your Praetor did you?"

“Pfft as if I would have a screaming baby upstage me. And that is a little too reminiscent of the whole Raken thing.”

“...True.”

Thane cleared his throat. “Evant, did you not call for us for a war council? I am not interested in petty gossip.”

“Oh really?” The Grand Master grinned. “It is probably yours then. I heard about that cantina party I wasn't invited to.”

“It was not a party. I was responding to a call *at* a cantina about Zappius zapping—”

“You didn't deny it.”

Thane sighed at him. “Yes, I offered, but no, it is not my child.”

Evant rubbed his chin. “Four hundred million credits says it's Marick's.”

“That is a lot of credits.” Dacien simply stated.

“You know I'm right. They were together for years before the coma.”

“Yes, but Marick is married to Atyiru now,” Thane reminded them.

“Both of whom she lived with after she woke. Which, I have to say, I am surprised she didn't at least try to kill them both in their sleep. And their kid. It's the best holodrama in the making.”

“If you say so.”

***One hour later...***

“Lord Panda, I need you to find Mav, however you need to do it.”

Socorra barely looked up from scrolling and flicking through her datapad as she addressed Howie in his office. He appeared completely dumbfounded by the statement.

“Who're you? And why me?”

“Because you're a bear. Everyone loves bears. And bears can sniff out mates from incredible distances so you should be able find him easily.”

“How about...no? And why can't you go do it?”

She placed a hand on her hip and cocked her head. "Because / have to plan and then host a really big party for Evant, the always- guest of honor. Would you like to trade with me? Please do. I'll even help out Mune while you're hosting."

"Oh, no. No. Anything to keep you from touching my office."

"Hey now, those Wardle comps weren't *that* bad...or late. I'm out of practice. And which GM made you the high and mighty grand poobear?"

"You have three seconds to leave before I start yelling."

"Excellent! Let me know when you find Mav!"

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### **Mortis HQ**

#### **Couple hours later**

Howie stood before Father Mortis and his Fateweavers, their faces covered with deep cowls.

"Father, I have infiltrated you for your vision help," he grumbled.

"I know, my son. We foresaw this day and have been looking forward to it. Tell me, what is it that you wish to know?"

"I wish to know where Mav is."

"I see. And what will you pay the oracles?"

Howie turned to the women. "Ahem, I have brought gifts of beer and poutine in exchange for your help." He started digging around his pockets. "Ahh, aand...pants. Hate them anyway."

The small coven burst out into hushed, excited whispers but they dare not speak to Howie directly.

"They are amenable," Mortis nodded. "You will wait here while they divine..."

#### **One hour later...**

"Seek this person, my child, and you will find your Mav." Mortis handed a small parchment to Howie, the lettering appearing to have been scrawled in blood...or red lipstick. Both? It was hard to tell.

"Well. That is convenient. Thanks!"

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**Arx**  
**Throne Room**  
**Couple hours later**

“Have you drank enough water today? Get your vitamins? Oh look! Howie is arriving now with Mav,” Socorra reported to Evant as she stood next to him at the throne, her eye never leaving her datapad. The Dark Council was gathered and speaking amongst themselves.

“Mav was f-f-found?” Evant’s face paled.

“Duh, and-or hello. You’re welcome. *My Lord.*”

Howie walked into the chamber completely pantsless and confident, and stood with his Council colleagues.

A lone figure walked into the throne room, the shadows carrying him first.

“Oh Maker, it really is him! SAVE ME!” Evant shrieked and cowered behind Socks, peeking over the woman’s shoulder.

“I told you I get job done. What is wrong? Is your blood sugar low? Do you need a lolly?” She started digging into her treat pouch. “A Jollyburst maybe? What flavor today. Have you eaten?”

“See Mav, the Mother, as promised.” The Prophet gestured to Socorra whom he addressed next. “Happy now? You have *no idea* the sacrifice I made to keep you out of my office.”

“*What?*” both “Mav” and Socorra asked Howie, then each other.

“Kam?”

“Socks?”

“SockKam– Hhowie- stop copying m- stop!”

“Panda explain yourself!” Evant yelled, slowly creeping out from behind his meat shield.

Howie scoffed, annoyed. “She asked me to find Mav! The Fate...witches or whatever said I would find him when I found the Mother, so I did! Pretty coincidental it was your Praetor, don’t you think? What are *you* playing at?”

“Howie, you didn’t give pants to *Fatweavers* did you? And Kam? Kaamm? ...don’t look at me like that. With the... eyes...” Socks raised a brow. “Do you need a lolly too? We should talk later about this.”

“No, no sharing my candy,” Evant reprimanded. “Wrong ‘Other Mav’. Crisis averted and since we’re gathered now anyway, Socorra...we must know, who’s the daddy?”

“Evant, do not be rude.” Thane chastised.

“Ah come on, we have to know!”

Socks rolled her eye. “Oh for *kark* sake. Not even that pregnant yet. If you really must know, the name is Tyris—”

“So it is Marick! I win! You all owe me four hundred million credits!”

“I made no such bet, Evant.” Dacien replied dryly. Realizing that was how much was on the table, everyone else emphatically shook their heads as well.

The woman almost seemed amused. “No, not Marick—”

“Wait, *Atyiru*? How does that...work?”

The Dark Council members rubbed their chins in thought.

“She is in fact a cyborg now,” James added as he joined, Mindloop toddling behind him.

“The probability of Itay is not laser sharks,” the very old SP-4 analysis droid contributed.

“Awww James, you fixed him for me!” Socorra clapped her hands at the beloved droid. “But, no again. Wyndell Tyris, Marick’s brother.”

Evant burst out laughing. “The brother! The holodrama keeps getting better and better!”

“Alright, that’s enough! You all have three seconds to leave before I start yelling!” Howie yelled.

Everyone but Evant quickly vacated the chamber.

“You too, Evant!”

“Dawww.. but this is my chair! Moom, Howie is being mean again!”

Caught tiptoeing out of the room, she casually walked back in and stood before the Prophet. “Howie dear, you two can be friends, right? Would you like a candy?”

“I SAID NO SHARING!”

“AND I SAID GET OUT OF HERE!”

“YOU'RE NOT MY REAL DAD!”

Socorra rubbed her temples. “My Lord, you have a party to get ready for.”

“Oh! Happy day!” The Grandmaster nearly skipped out of the chamber.

Howie and Socks were left standing alone in front of the throne. He opened his mouth to yell again but she whipped out a lollipop from her pouch and waved it enticingly.

“Shhh. It's poutine flavored. I won't tell.” The woman winked, which, with one eye, was more like a long, awkward blink.

Howie stared at it for a second before pawing it too, eyeing her suspiciously. “Acceptable.”

“Do you need a bearhu—”

“*Three. Seconds.*”

“Didn't think so! Oop being called, oh and comps start again tomorrow right? Mwahaha. Byee!”