

Island Bonds: A Rhy lance Story

By: Ele(Rhy, Ben)

Furious.

Incensed.

Vengeful.

These were the words used to describe the mind set of Rhy lance as he and M.O.R.S.E. walked through the trees on the island of *Tekpantli*. The vision that had enraptured his mind had left him shaken, and an aching sensation filled his chest as he remembered sticking the knife into the woman he loved...cared for. He knew that his feelings for Lucine Vasano ran deep, but just how deep was something he never knew he would be able to experience again. He had thought those feelings were lost to him, but he was...wrong.

The two stopped as Rhy lance saw something through the trees. A caxqette seemed to be...playing. And with a child. The scientist had never seen something like this. The beasts had been, to his knowledge, ravenous and mindless, attacking anything on sight with no discrimination. Only the gods seemed immune to the creatures rage and aggression. But this child was seemingly playing with a pet.

A few adults, also trailed by caxqettes, walked into the frame. They too seemed immune to the beasts rageful disposition. The adults began to communicate with the child.

As they and the child, spoke, it was clearly an older language that Rhy lance didn't know. The Chiss turned to M.O.R.S.E.

"Do you know what they are saying?"

"You built me with advanced linguistics abilities, Master Rhy lance. While this language is different than regular Selenian, there are markers of similarities that unlocked it for my processors."

Rhy lance waited for a moment, waiting for the droid to explain what was being said, but apparently M.O.R.S.E. hadn't picked up on that.

"And they are saying?"

"My apologies Master, the adults were informing the child about the dangerous outsiders coming to the Island. They told him to keep his **Caxat** close. The child responded with affirmation. He

said his friend and protector would stay by his side. It seems these variants of Caxqette are somewhat domesticated, perhaps even with some form of mental link with the islanders.”

“Anything else?”

“Yes, there are mentions of a *Maustli*. It seems to be their god and protector of th island. I would assume this is the one responsible for your neurological imbalance on the shuttle.”

Rhylance continued to watch the scene in front of him. One of the adults, and their caxat, walked away. The child and the second adult stayed while th kid remained at play. While revenge remained in the front of his mind, his scientific curiosity was stronger.

“M.O.R.S.E. bring *Providence*. I did not think it would be necessary, but my mind has changed. Robotic crew only, and be fast. Be sure that it is ready to contain four subjects.”

“As you command, Master Rhylance.”

Rhylance snuck forward as the islanders continued to play and observe. The Caxat’s were singularly focused on their bonded ones. He needed to be quick with this. The Chiss pulled out his blaster and set it to stun. Aiming the device at the adult first, he pulled the trigger. Blue rings shot out and collided with him, knocking the male adult off his feet. The child turned to his fallen islander and looked frightened. Before he could scream, however, he too was hit by the blue rigs on a stun shot.

The Caxat’s snarled sas they searched for whoever attack their people. They bolted into the jungle, running past where Rhylance was hidden. He toom aim, and fired at one from behind. It wasn’t as armored as some of the beasts he had encountered, and as his blaster had been upgraded, the stun rings took the creature down. The final Caxat’s eyes rested on the Chiss. It snarled as it began to charge. Rhylance waited until it was close enough, and as it leaped at him, he fired again before ducking away. The rings collide with the beast in the air, and it collided with a large tree with a sickening crack before dropping to the ground.

Rhylance could see that it was still breathing, but was clearly injured. It mattered not. He just needed it alive. Pulling out one of his scalpels, he approached the four down bodies, marking each with a single cut. He needed to keep their bodies immobile, and his toxins did their work.

As M.O.R.S.E. approached, he assisted in the collection of the four bodies, and when the Upsilon command shuttle set down, Rhyalnce left the island. But he wasn’t completely heartless. He sent out mass intel to all Arconan lines of communication infoming them of what he had learned. If they were intelligent enough, they wouldn’t die.

He had other priorities, and the research stations at SISSMA were waiting. There was much to learn about these creatures.