



TEASER

OVER BLACK:

SUPERIMPOSE:

"Love overpowers justice. While mercy merely robs it."

~ Zorustra, Codex of Maileus

FADE IN:

EXT. DESERT - DAY

The suns beat down. Sands blow in the breeze and everything appears to be largely at peace.

We hear voices nearby, stern and barking as though giving orders.

In fact, that's exactly what we're doing as we get a REVERSE ANGLE to see D'BRONZE, the source of the disturbance.

Standing before twenty CADETS in full uniform including chest guard, helmet and battle rifles.

UVERE stands to one side, arms crossed, keeping himself to himself and avoiding getting involved in D'bronze's business.

D'BRONZE

Blue team, red team, split up.

The group splits up into the pre-determined teams, one featuring red bandanas around their arms, one with blue.

D'BRONZE (CONT'D)

Good, there may be hope for ya yet.

Uvere smirks to himself, D'bronze is loving this.

D'BRONZE (CONT'D)

Now, ya all know why we're here, that there -

He nods to a large bunker not too far away. There's nothing special about it, in fact it's quite the dump.

D'BRONZE (CONT'D)

Is a Cassian outpost. Any of ya happen to know what the Cassians are?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The group look around one another, that's a no.

D'BRONZE (CONT'D)
Fressin' thought not. Uvere?

He turns his head and steps back, freeing up the stage for the nervous looking scientist who has yet to notice he's being watched.

To make it more obvious, D'bronze clears his throat which makes Uvere turn his head and finally catch on.

UVERE
Sorry, I wasn't...
(beat, coughs)
Cassians are hostile. They've stolen a case of Cyril-29, used in warfare and not something you want to be breathing in if you want to live to 600. You get in, neutralise, get the case, get out. Any questions?

Something about Uvere's posture has changed, he seems to be a little taller and there's a similar sense of enjoyment coming from him to what we saw in D'bronze moments ago.

MALE CADET
(raises hand)
How do we get in?

D'BRONZE
(sly)
All down to ya. Red team, ya up first.

The team prepare to head out, and we:

MONTAGE

Inside the darkened bunker only a thin trail of light outlines the door and that's all we can see.

1. The door is KICKED open, virtually off its hinges, and the RED TEAM enter, guns raised and ready for attack.

They OPEN FIRE as the CASSIAN RAIDERS make themselves known.

2. Several people lie on the ground, one of them with a red bandana representing the red team whilst those with white bandanas are the Cassian Raiders.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

3. Their numbers thinned out to just nine cadets, the red team approaches a second door and their leader kicks it open.

This time, he throws something inside and takes cover as a cloud of smoke erupts from whatever projectile he threw.

With the smoke at its thickest, he nods to the other cadets and five of them storm the room to a hail of gunfire.

A moment later the leader and two of his companions exit the room with a white case in their possession.

4. Once again there is peace, though this time our focus is on the Cassian Raiders in the darkened room.

Without warning, they are lifted off their feet and disappear offscreen. We hear gunfire from above and when it stops, the BLUE TEAM drop down in their place.

5. The complete team approach the second door into the Cyril-29 storage room.

The blue leader takes something from her belt and holds it for the rest of the team to see. It's a small canister with a blue liquid visible inside.

BLUE LEADER
Mava-18, should use up all the
oxygen in the room in...

She opens the door, throws the small canister into the room and shuts the door again before anyone inside can get a decent shot off. She waits until the firing stops and smiles.

BLUE LEADER (CONT'D)
That long.

Once more, she opens the door and the people inside are unconscious, all except one who shoots three of the cadets before passing out himself.

Not bothering with their fallen comrades, the blue team run in and claim the case, then run out, as we:

BLACK OUT:

END OF TEASER

THE FERATU CHRONICLES

"Edge of Reason"

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ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. TYRANNIAN LEGION CAMP - DAY

Establishing shot of a walled, sprawling camp in the distance. It sticks out amongst the barren landscape that stretches out in all directions. A few shrubs and trees dotting the surface.

A large flying object comes into view as it SPEEDS past the screen.

Its immense wings flapping as it heads towards the base.

A closer look at the flying creature reveals it's dragon like physique. Black, oily skin covered in scales, it's great curved wings flapping away and a long winding tail.

We TRACK UP the creature's body, along its long slender neck to reveal a snake like head with rows of razor sharp teeth glimpsed through a bridle. This is a MELKOR.

POV of the melkor as it SOARS shows an aerial view of the camp.

It's an expansive settlement dotted with brown structures and towers at each of the walls' points.

Below, miinish carry weapons, pull wagons or spar with each other.

A large landing platform on the upper tier of one of the camp's buildings LOOMS closer.

We ANGLE ON the melkor's back to focus on a leather saddle and finally its rider, a helmeted RALOTH.

He grips the reins tightly as he steers the melkor onto the platform.

The melkor gracefully lands on the platform. Its clawed feet touching the stone as it tucks its wings onto its back.

It SCREECHES as it peers around its surroundings.

Raloth dismounts from the saddle, removing his helmet to reveal his horned visage.

A man with wrinkled, purplish grey skin approaches him. He's a MELKOR WRANGLER. Dressed in a black leather jerkin and chain mail.

He takes the bridle from Raloth as he gently strokes the melkor's head.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

As the melkor wrangler guides Raloth's mount away to one of the many stables that dot the platform. Another two MELKOR WRANGLERS, wielding force pikes appear.

They fall in step with Raloth as they escort him across the platform and into the entrance of a building.

EXT. DESERT - DAY

The cadets, now all together once more, stand in the sand at attention, awaiting D'bronze's comments on their performance.

Both teams have a white case before them supposedly containing the Cyril-29.

In the distance we see the "Cassian Raiders" busy, some are clearing up whilst others are just taking a break.

Thoroughly impressed, though trying to hide it. D'bronze disguises what looks suspiciously like a warm smile and a glow in his eyes, with crossed arms and a forced frowning expression.

D'BRONZE

Good work though I have ta say
the lack of care given to ya
fallen friends was a lil'
worryin'.

(getting "speechy")

These people will be out there,
riskin' their lives for ya. Some
of them may even die for ya. Show
them the respect they deserve,
but never at the cost of the
mission.

It doesn't take a genius to realize he's not quoting from any manual, this is experience talking.

D'BRONZE (CONT'D)

(lighter)

Now take a break and we'll start
the next course as soon as we're
set up.

Thankful for the brief reprieve, the cadets head off.

Once the cadets are out of earshot. Uvere observes his attitude suspiciously.

D'Bronze seems at ease, happy even.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

UVERE

You setting them up for something?

A smirk reveals D'Bronze knows exactly what Uvere is referring to.

D'BRONZE

Ya know as well as I do, in the field, all business. When we're relaxin' they've got to bond with each other and the man in charge. Ain't happenin' if they're scared he'll bust their mivonks just for talkin' to him.

Uvere shrugs, he has a very good point.

D'BRONZE (CONT'D)

(grins)

Plus the next course isn't fun...

He and Uvere turn to each other and a sick grin crosses both their faces.

UVERE

For them.

The two laugh and the noise carries over the dunes as we ZOOM IN on the cadets.

One, a stuck up little madam with her hair well kept despite the conditions, rolls her eyes. This is KEDNA SEPTIMIUS.

We know her better as the Blue Team leader, sans the helmet, which now rests under her arm.

She turns to a buffed up cadet walking beside her, SAMUEL WALTON. He may be well built, but he looks like he's somewhat lacking in confidence.

KEDNA

How do such pudanzs get the reputation those two have?

SAMUEL

(uncomfortable)

Maybe they're more than they seem.

There's a ruckus up ahead as several of the cadets argue. Two sides have formed, red team and blue team, squaring off against each other.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KEDNA
(frustrated)
They do this every dauchink time!

She marches over, fully convinced of her authority, much to Samuel's amusement as he follows close behind and listens in on the argument.

KEDNA (CONT'D)
What's the problem?

The red team leader, DANTIUS, best described as a muscle bound pretty-boy with a slight tan is facing up to one of the blue team, VARRO, who's about half his size.

DANTIUS
Your friend tells me you were the better team.

VARRO
So I'm wrong?

There's bickering from the rest of the cadets also, but it seems these two are the instigators of the issue.

KEDNA
I'd say he was right -
(turns to Samuel)
Wouldn't you?

Sam holds his hands up, he's not getting involved.

SAMUEL
What does it matter? Mazakelli thought we did a good job, leave it at that.

DANTIUS
Hey, I didn't say you didn't do a good job, just that we did it better.

Kedna rolls her tongue along her teeth, her frustration growing with the arrogant Dantius. She doesn't move for a second, then POUNCES on him.

He throws her to one side and she lands in the sand, albeit on her feet and ready to attack once more. Her eyes go black.

They run at each other and meet in the middle, grappling with all their might, each trying to put the other on the floor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

All the while, the red and blue teams are watching, cheering for their respective leaders. All except Samuel of course, who stands back from the action.

Though Dantius has the superior strength, it becomes clear that Kedna's skill is superior and she soon gains the advantage - rolling him over her shoulder.

As soon as he's down, she FLIPS backwards, landing astride his stomach with her hands under his neck. She's won.

The cheering stops, the red team looking disappointed at the outcome but the blues couldn't be happier.

KEDNA

So how about we just leave it at that?

Dantius eyes her position, raising his eyebrows slightly with a mischievous grin.

DANTIUS

Oh, I don't know. I was thinking we could...

Her serious expression gives him the hint he needs to shut up.

Kedna stands up and offers Dantius a hand, which he gratefully accepts whilst using his free hand to brush himself down.

DANTIUS (CONT'D)

Maybe next time?

She gets in as close as she can and whispers in his ear.

KEDNA

I wouldn't count on it.

As she walks towards Samuel she slyly slaps Dantius across the backside.

STAY ON Samuel who looks entirely disinterested in the display of posturing.

EXT. SNOWFELT TERRITORY - DAY

An establishing shot of the typically snowy landscape.

EXT. ANIMAL SAFE HAVEN - SNOWFELT TERRITORY - DAY

Snow lightly patters against a large white domed building. Animals peacefully graze or mill about the grounds. Birds chirping in the snow dusted branches of the trees.

A slight flickering disturbance indicates there's a protective shield shimmering around the haven's far edges.

INT. PEN - ANIMAL SAFE HAVEN - DAY

In a pen-like enclosure that mimics the outside surroundings, yet more animals mill about. However, these ones are recovering from injury or illness judging by the bandages or splints that bedaub them.

FOCUS ON Alexandra as she examines the hooves of an astata that chews away on greenish brown pellets from a bucket.

ALEXANDRA

You're supposed to be hand
feeding them. Otherwise they'll
gorge.

We PULLBACK to reveal that Chardonnae is holding the bucket containing the animal feed.

CHARDONNAE

(uncomfortable)
But that would involve touching
them. And in exchange having them
come into close proximity with
me.

Alexandra gives him an amused look.

ALEXANDRA

I never thought I'd see you ever
shy away from touching of any
sort.

(off Chardonnae)
Gloves are over there.

She nods towards a counter cluttered with medical instruments and other supplies.

He strides over, quickly dumping the bucket on the counter as he searches amongst the clutter.

CHARDONNAE

(conversationally)
So I attended Tarusa's latest
"charity" gala.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHARDONNAE (CONT'D)

I had to endure over three
stultifying solar hours without
refreshment's, alcoholic or
otherwise.

He finds the box of gloves and pulls one on with a snap.

CHARDONNAE (CONT'D)

Not a patch on your old cascade
balls if you ask -

ALEXANDRA

(eyes him)

Don't. I know what you're doing.
It won't work.

Chardonnae attempts to look innocent as he snaps the other
glove on.

CHARDONNAE

A friend can't simply reminisce
about old times, without ulterior
motives?

She raises an eyebrow at that, not buying it in the
slightest.

ALEXANDRA

I-I'm not ready. I'm still
grieving Paris death for Shifu's
sake.

Chardonnae hefts the bucket off the counter.

CHARDONNAE

You said that twenty years ago.
There's a difference between
grieving and wallowing.

ALEXANDRA

(stands; frustrated)

You have no right telling-

She stops herself, her face flashing with regret
immediately upon saying it.

Something else flickers underneath Chardonnae's bravado,
almost imperceptible. A distant painful memory.

CHARDONNAE

(brittle)

You're not the only one to have
lost someone Alex. The circle
continues. As it has since time
began.

He turns away from her, as if to feed one of the animals.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALEXANDRA

(awkward)

I'm sorry. I didn't mean-

(beat; sighs)

Gods, I'm a terrible friend. Let me make it up to you.

(off his silence)

What can I do? Please tell me.

Chardonnae faces her again, seemingly recovered, a twinkle in his blue eyes.

CHARDONNAE

Oh, I have a few suggestions.

We STAY ON a wary Alexandra who seems less than confident at what she's now gotten herself into.

EXT. DUNES - DAY

Though it's unlikely we're too far away from where we were earlier there's nothing as far as we can see to pinpoint our exact location. It's just sand and sky in every direction.

D'Bronze and Uvere are stood in the dunes, a flag planted in the ground next to them. Around the dunes there are almost twenty others, and one still in his hand.

D'bronze pauses for a moment, marvelling at his work.

D'BRONZE

I love this one.

He and Uvere share a moment of almost sadistic pleasure at whatever is to come.

EXT. DUNES - DAY - LATER

The suns are at their highest point in the sky and it's clearly making the feratu on the dunes very uncomfortable, but that's sort of the point.

Seemingly unaffected, D'bronze is busy explaining the task to the cadets as they listen intently, though they're all exhausted by this point.

D'BRONZE

Ya task is to, on foot, collect ten flags. First team back here with their flags gets this one right here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He motions to the one in the ground right next to him.

D'BRONZE (CONT'D)
They win. Everybody followin'?

They all nod.

D'BRONZE (CONT'D)
Now, the catch.

Without thinking twice about where he's walking, D'bronze steps out into the dunes and takes a few paces before stopping and kneeling.

He places his hand into the sand and removes a small circular box with a red light on top.

He shows it to the cadets.

D'BRONZE (CONT'D)
This is a stun mine. Step on it
and ya'll be out on ya shaugo.
Wake up with a splittin' head.

Uvere squints, something isn't quite right.

D'bronze's hand moves to the red light and the pressure sensor around it.

D'BRONZE (CONT'D)
Thankfully, enough exposure to
these things will either kill ya
or make ya more or less immune.
Somethin' to look forward to.
Observe.

He goes to press the pressure sensor as Uvere's eyes widen in horror.

UVERE
Stop!

He does, looking slightly bewildered.

D'BRONZE
Somethin' wrong?

Uvere approaches D'bronze, careful to fill D'bronze's footsteps in the sand to avoid any mines.

He treads cautiously but it doesn't take him long to get there.

UVERE
I'm not sure.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He examines the stun mine in D'bronze's hand more closely, careful not to touch it.

D'BRONZE

Ya couldn't wait? I ain't exactly done yet.

UVERE

Neither am I.

D'BRONZE

Can ya at least tell me -

UVERE

That's not a stun mine.

(beat)

If you like breathing you should probably avoid pressing that pad.

OFF Uvere's wary expression as he scrutinizes the stun mine once more, we:

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

EXT. DUNES - AFTERNOON

The cadets are getting restless and concerned about whatever's going on and D'bronze is only getting more and more frustrated.

D'BRONZE
What the harn is it?

UVERE
(beat; flat)
It's a live explosive.

D'bronze damn near drops the mine in shock as the cadets all back up slightly.

D'BRONZE
Live?

Uvere carefully turns the explosive around in D'bronze's hand so that the back faces him. Slowly and carefully he turns the back panel then breathes a sigh of relief.

D'bronze turns the mine over in his hand gingerly, the light is off, the explosive disarmed.

He stares at it for a minute, then looks at the very nervous Uvere, and finally glances over at his cadets.

D'BRONZE (CONT'D)
Dismissed.

They don't move.

D'BRONZE (CONT'D)
(snaps)
Dismissed!

The force in his voice is enough to get them moving, they all head away from the dunes. Leaving their mentors behind.

D'BRONZE
(quietly)
Ya think it's the only one?

UVERE
Unlikely.

There's a moment of contemplation before D'bronze manages to take in the whole situation.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

D'BRONZE

This could have set off any others, it could have wiped out the entire group.

UVERE

I know.

D'BRONZE

Ain't the easiest thing to set up.

UVERE

I don't know, the whole training scheme was something they threw together last minute, they always do.

D'BRONZE

The instructors at the Academy -

UVERE

No, they didn't know about it either, stops them giving any last minute tips to the cadets.

They're both thinking the same thing, but neither of them wants to be the one to say it.

D'BRONZE

It's one of them.

(beat)

There's a spy in the cadets.

Knowing the unpleasant task that awaits them, D'bronze and Uvere look out across the dunes as the cadets continue to walk away - getting smaller and smaller against the horizon.

INT. HEAD BUILDING - MEETING ROOM - DAY

PAN across a large chamber that is decorated with silk wall hangings and a hastily rolled out, uneven black carpet. It's obvious this room has been hurriedly spruced up.

The Tyrannian Legion's crest flags, adorn the walls. A black background with white striping and a skeletal horned dragon head in the center.

In the center of the room is a long banquet table laden with various delicacies.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

We FOCUS ON the banquet table where three individuals sit. Raloth is at the head of the table clutching a silver chalice filled with amber liquid.

PTOLEMUS sits left of him wearing a leather jerkin adorned with gold trimming paired with gold vambraces.

The SAVANT sits on the opposite side of Raloth. Wearing a black silk robe covered in jewels. A fang necklace hangs around his enormous neck.

Raloth drains his chalice and turns to Ptolemus.

RALOTH

Congratulations on your promotion General. I cannot see any other successor to lead the legion but you.

Ptolemus nods gracefully.

PTOLEMUS

Many thanks Supreme Commander. It is an honour to be given this position.

SAVANT

Letsss pray you are a credit to the legion. Jussst assss Zugrak wasss before meeting hissss end at the handsss of a blood fiend.

Ptolemus bristles as he regards the Savant's features. There's a malevolent glint in his red ruby eyes.

The Savant hisses intermittently, the rakesh equivalent for laughter, at Ptolemus' reaction.

RALOTH

How do the preparations for the directive go on your side Savant?

SAVANT

We have five hundred thousssand ssoldierss from the Ssynapsuss ready for battle. War bandss from the Colubra, Pythinasss and Aniliia are being rallied assss we sspeak. My envoyssss to the Raichekssss tell me we can expect them to fight at the time of deployment.

Raloth smiles at this new information.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RALOTH

Most pleasing Savant. What of
your efforts General?

PTOLEMUS

(proudly)

The prototypes for the trawler
and AAP are complete.

Ptolemus reaches into one of his pockets and pulls out a
small round device. A holoprojector, that he CLICKS on. A
small holographic image of a massive bulbous cannon
appears.

PTOLEMUS (CONT'D)

The engineers have begun work on
the seismic cannon. The new
technology supplied by the
Drakans will be more than a match
for Clan Alliance artillery.

He FLICKS off the projector.

RALOTH

(smiles)

Everything is falling into place.
The Great One will be most
pleased at these developments.

Ptolemus grins at Raloth and then to the Savant at this.

The Savant returns the gesture with a pleased hiss though
his eyes still glint with malevolence.

RALOTH (CONT'D)

Your reports are not the only
reason for my visit. The Dark One
has a mission for you both.

Ptolemus and the Savant look on intrigued, at this
announcement.

INT. CORRIDOR - SNOWFELT PALACE - DAY

Alexandra and Chardonnae stroll down a pristine white hall.

ALEXANDRA

I don't understand. Whatever it
is, you're insinuating...

Chardonnae throws her a disbelieving expression.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHARDONNAE

Now you're deliberately being obtuse.

They pause as they reach an elaborate door, emblazoned with a glittering snow flake.

ALEXANDRA

(wary)

This is Paris' room.

Chardonnae shakes his head as he opens the door to show a pristine room.

CHARDONNAE

It's his shrine.

He enters without another word as Alex follows him into:

INT. PARIS' ROOM - SNOWFELT PALACE - DAY

Chardonnae casually runs his hand along the shelves of a bookcase laden with tomes and images of a smiling man and Alexandra.

With a quizzical eyebrow he holds his dust free hand up for inspection.

CHARDONNAE

Someone cleans this room. Whether it is you or someone you hire, is entirely irrelevant. One thing is very obvious. You need to let it go.

Alexandra draws a shuddering breath as if trying to calm herself.

ALEXANDRA

This wasn't what I meant. You can't expect me to do this.

Chardonnae tenderly touches her hand.

CHARDONNAE

When my parents died all those years ago I disposed of everything save for two things.

He rustles within his coat to produce a now familiar ornate pipe.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHARDONNAE (CONT'D)

My father's rush pipe and
mother's favourite pendant.

(off Alex)

It wasn't because I couldn't bare
to remember them. On the contrary
I've never forgotten.

Alexandra sniffs, her eyes glistening with unshed tears.
She's touched by his concern.

ALEXANDRA

(determined)

I appreciate what you're-

CHARDONNAE

They're just things. No one can
take away your memories. Choose
something. Otherwise the past
will continue to weigh you down.

OFF Chardonnae's serious expression as he makes his point.

INT. LABORATORY - OUTPOST - DAY

Looking well within his comfort zone, Uvere gets to work as fast paced music begins to play over the scene, heightening the investigative feel of the sequence.

UVERE (V.O.)

The charges we found, use a
powdered explosive, they're old
but we still have them on file.

He holds up a CADET UNIFORM and lowers it into some sort of green chemical bath. Bubbles flow from the uniform but nothing else.

Shaking his head, Uvere turns to D'bronze who is apparently growing frustrated.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - OUTPOST - DAY

D'bronze uses a swab on someone's hand, placing the small piece of material into a glass tube before handing it to Uvere who quickly exits.

We ZOOM OUT a little and reveal that the hand belongs to none other than Dantius, our friend from the red team.

CLOSE UP on D'BRONZE

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

D'BRONZE
You were arguin' with another
cadet earlier, why?

A different voice answers, and we know there's been a TIME
SHIFT while we've been here.

KEDNA (O.S.)
You're kidding?

ON SCENE reveals Kedna is now sat opposite, this time with
Uvere standing in on the interview.

D'BRONZE
Answer the question.

KEDNA
It was just some friendly
competition, nothing serious.

We get in close with Uvere, he's eying the cadet who has
now slipped off-screen with suspicion.

UVERE
So you've got no grudges with
anyone here?

Quickly PAN across to see the next cadet, the Blue Team's
shortest member Varro.

VARRO
I wouldn't say that. The guys
don't exactly take me seriously,
some times I get a little
frustrated. But you think I could
do this?

D'BRONZE
Ya tell me.

Yet again, it's a different voice that answers, this time
belonging to Samuel.

SAMUEL
Honestly, I couldn't say.

D'BRONZE
Why's that?

SAMUEL
I don't know anyone who'd do
something like that, not just for
some kind of grudge anyway.

D'bronze ponders this for a moment. He has a point, there's
no denying that.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

D'BRONZE

So why?

MARCELLA

I don't know.

A girl who reminds us slightly of Tazul has now taken the seat opposite D'bronze. She's attractive, looks somewhat disinterested with the situation, but she's not the type of girl you'd cross. Meet MARCELLA.

MARCELLA (CONT'D)

Money? Glory? Not everyone wants to be a bad guy. Oh, and there's the "bad boy" image, if that's your thing.

D'bronze looks as though he's about to blow his lid with her, he's clearly not in the mood for games just now, but he settles for a death stare which is matched by:

WELLS, a woman who is clearly from the same mould as D'bronze himself as she looks into his eyes with a piercing glare of her own.

Uvere looks from Wells to D'bronze, they're getting nothing this way.

From out of the silence bursts LAUGHTER as Uvere and GARVER, the latest cadet get to know each other, courtesy of Uvere's "good-cop" approach.

D'BRONZE (O.S.)

So.

Back in the driving seat, D'bronze talks to a portly looking young cadet, fate having cruelly named him JEK PORKINS.

Jek shifts uncomfortably under D'bronze's gaze while Uvere appears to be sulking in the corner having been benched.

JEK

Look, I just wanted to join so I could drive battle craft, I didn't think it would be this difficult.

A sob story isn't what D'bronze is looking for and it's quite clear that our boy Jek hasn't got anything useful to say.

Sensing D'bronze's annoyance, Jek shuts up and bites his tongue to stop himself from asking a question of his own, one he's been dying to ask.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

D'bronze can feel Jek's hidden need to speak and raises an eyebrow.

D'BRONZE
Anything you want to ask?

HERON
Can I go now?

An equally meek looking female cadet, HERON, is sat in the chair, doing her very best not to cower away from the imposing D'bronze.

He rubs his forehead, grits his teeth and after a moment nods. Eternally grateful, she stands and walks out with a hurried pace.

D'bronze and Uvere share a look that tells us that it's not been the best of days for them.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LABORATORY - OUTPOST - LATER

Uvere studies the latest uniform to be placed into the green chemical bath, this one has released a slight red trail as something reacts inside.

UVERE
We have another winner.

D'BRONZE
How many does that make?

UVERE
Three, the same as the swabs. And they're from the same cadets too.

D'bronze savors his little victory, though of course the hardest part is yet to come.

D'BRONZE
Who came up positive?

Both we and Uvere notice a slight reluctance in his voice, as though he doesn't want to know.

Uvere hands over three personal files on three different cadets, their pictures and names displayed clearly on the front page.

We ANGLE on the front page to see the images are of:

SAMUEL WALTON

KEDNA SEPTIMIUS and

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEK PORKINS.

D'bronze lets out a long sigh, though it doesn't appear to be one of relief, more like disappointment.

D'BRONZE (CONT'D)
Anythin' else?

UVERE
There is one thing, seems odd
but...

D'BRONZE
What? Anythin', anythin' might
help.

Uvere backs off a little, surprised at D'bronze's sudden insistence and the fact that it lacks any sort of composure. He's desperate almost.

UVERE
They share a room back at the
academy, which is just about the
only place they could have
switched the charges around.
Assuming they somehow knew we
were coming to take them away on
this training mission.

D'BRONZE
(quickly)
So?

Again surprised, Uvere takes a beat before starting again.

UVERE
So, it's possible that only one
of them was involved. Charges
like that leave a lot of residue,
which is why we found them in the
first place. But it's possible
that one or two of them, came
into contact by accident.

Now comes the relief. It's not complete but it's something for D'bronze.

Though quite why he's acting like this isn't certain, even to Uvere.

D'BRONZE
Do ya think that's possible?

A moment to think it over is all Uvere needs, with what little evidence he has, he nods.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

UVERE

Two of the positive results were
a little less certain than one.

D'BRONZE

So one is a definite?

Reluctantly, Uvere nods once more.

D'BRONZE (CONT'D)

Which?

Uvere reaches for two of the files and moves them away
leaving just one behind.

He and D'bronze both look at it for a moment, and then we
follow suit.

We PUSH IN on a picture of SAMUEL WALTON just before, we:

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

INT. HEAD BUILDING - MEETING ROOM - DAY

Ptolemus and the Savant listen intently to Raloth as he continues:

RALOTH

The intelligence legion at Walla Walla has succeeded in retrieving clues about the location of one of the Eyes.

SAVANT

Fassscinating...

RALOTH

You both are to organise a task force to uncover it's whereabouts and retrieve it.

Raloth removes a flat circular object from his armour and places it on the table.

RALOTH (CONT'D)

This has all the information needed on the Eye.

Raloth stands. The other two immediately rise from their seats in a show of respect.

RALOTH (CONT'D)

This mission is of the utmost importance to the Dark One's prime objective. Succeed and you will be greatly rewarded.

Finished his piece, Raloth turns. His black cape swishing behind him dramatically as he walks out of the chamber.

The melkor wranglers moving off to flank him once again.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - OUTPOST - DAY

His head hanging low, Samuel is making little effort to hide his guilt as D'bronze and Uvere sit opposite.

What's surprising is that D'bronze's accusing glare has now disappeared, his expression softened significantly in what looks rather like sympathy.

D'BRONZE

Why'd ya do it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Though we can't see his face we can hear the unmistakable sound of soft sobs coming from Sam's direction.

D'bronze surprisingly makes no move to take advantage of Samuel's lack of stability, and leans back in his chair, backing off for a moment.

D'BRONZE (CONT'D)
It's sieskin, we have time.

Uvere looks astounded, incredulous even.

UVERE
We have... we have time?
(beat; to D'bronze)
Can I speak to you?
(to Sam)
Just a moment.

Sam looks up, dark rings under his eyes. He looks surprised at the way things are going, even more so as D'bronze and Uvere move outside.

INT. INTERROGATION BLOCK - CORRIDOR - DAY

The space outside of the interrogation room is cramped, clearly to give potential suspects a sense of claustrophobia, but for Uvere and D'bronze it's just an annoyance as they face each other.

D'BRONZE
What?

UVERE
What exactly has gotten into your head?

D'bronze doesn't appear to be following, he's off his game big time.

UVERE (CONT'D)
He nearly kills us, both of us,
and you're going easy on him?
What happened to before?

D'BRONZE
We had to find out who it was,
now we have, there's no need -

UVERE
De-sha! Your game isn't the
easiest to learn but I know
you're off it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

D'BRONZE

That could've made a lot more sense.

A rare scathing look from Uvere is enough to cut D'bronze down.

D'BRONZE (CONT'D)

I just can't be sure it's him we're lookin' for.

UVERE

I can, he won't look at us -

D'BRONZE

He's nervous.

UVERE

(ignores him)

He's covered in residue. The report came back from the academy, his room is covered in it. The evidence doesn't lie.

D'BRONZE

I don't -

Uvere throws his hands up in an overly dramatic manner and is about to storm back into the room when D'bronze pulls him back.

D'BRONZE (CONT'D)

I don't want to ruin his career, his reputation, over what could be true.

UVERE

Somehow I don't think he wanted to kill a few cadets and their teachers. You know as well as I do, this whole thing smells of distraction.

(beat; sighs)

If there's something going on we have to know. If you won't do what has to be done, then I will.

And with that, he jerks away from D'bronze's grip and storms back into the interrogation room.

UVERE (CONT'D)

(shouting)

Why did you do it? Tell me!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

D'bronze looks through the doorway as Uvere sits down with little grace, SLAMMING his fist down on the desk - hard. We see the androgen tense up, that hurt.

We PUSH IN on D'bronze as he watches sympathetically and we:

FLASH TO:

EXT. CHOLAK COMPOUND - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

A much younger, D'bronze sports a similar expression to the one we left his present self on. Though this one is more a look of self pity, the kind a rookie sports on his first mission.

MERRANA

Anythin'?

D'bronze doesn't move but we're quite certain MERRANA, dressed in the same warrior garb as the other twenty or so men and women outside the compound, is talking to him.

She's a little intimidating, her rifle hanging from one shoulder having been cast aside in favour of a curved tribal sword.

Finally, D'bronze looks up, shakes his head.

D'BRONZE

Camp's abandoned, no sign of them.

MERRANA

Good, everybody move out!

She motions for them to approach the compound and sure enough the twenty-odd soldiers stand and CHARGE towards the building.

It doesn't take long for something to go wrong as a number of them are GUNNED DOWN from behind. They stumble to the ground, dead by the time they impact.

Merrana has just enough time to turn around and see a large group of CHOLAK WARRIORS hidden amongst the rocks around the surrounding ridge before she too is shot down.

D'bronze dives for the floor in the hope of finding cover, he's no longer panicking but it's his only hope for survival.

He turns to one side, and we see the face of a fallen warrior, his eyes wide in a now permanent look of fear.

INT. PARIS' ROOM - SNOWFELT PALACE - DAY

The room is bare, stripped of everything that once indicated it's former occupant. Boxes stuffed full of possessions cramp the floor.

POP!

CLOSE ON a now cork less wine bottle as it pours a dark crimson liquid into two waiting wine glasses.

We PULLBACK to reveal a weary Chardonnae and Alexandra. Sweatier and dustier than when we last saw them.

CHARDONNAE

I was saving this to denote a moment of particular significance. Now seems appropriate.

He clinks his wine glass against Alexandra's and they sip from their glasses.

Alexandra seems in awe, not quite believing it yet as she eyes all the packed boxes and the now empty room.

ALEXANDRA

(relieved)
I did it.

Chardonnae gives her a warm smile.

CHARDONNAE

Being the insufferably curious tolska you know and love, I have to ask. Have you decided?

She nods pulling out a glinting white snowflake mould the size of her palm.

ALEXANDRA

(off Chardonnae; fondly)
When we first met...Paris was so bad a cook that shegos was the only thing he could manage. This was the first thing he ever bought for me.

CHARDONNAE

(smiles)
This is only the beginning. You're not done yet.

ALEXANDRA

(half-joking)
What have I gotten myself in for?

INT. HEAD BUILDING - MEETING ROOM - DAY

The Savant and Ptolemus stand here in discussion. The banquet table now cleared of its sumptuous spread.

SAVANT

Ssso we are in agreement? I
sshall elect a team of my elite
trackerssss and warriorsss for the
mission.

PTOLEMUS

My team shall cooperate with
yours on the search.

SAVANT

(nods)
Sso it ssshall.

With that, the Savant slithers off. Ptolemus watching him go with a suspicious eye.

INT. INTERROGATION BLOCK - CORRIDOR - DAY

D'bronze sits in a chair here. The chair pulled up to where he can watch the going's on in the interrogation room via a two sided mirror.

Closer inspection however reveals D'bronze is asleep. His head bowed, almost resting on his chest. We CLOSE ON his eyelids as they rapidly flutter.

FLASH TO:

EXT. CHOLAK COMPOUND - NIGHT - DREAM/FLASHBACK

D'bronze is now kneeling amongst seven of his comrades, the only survivors of the group as the bodies of their fellows are cast aside to form a large pile.

The CHOLAK WARRIORS wear armor with an alien symbol at the center. They're all armed, they're all dangerous, and they're all looking for a kill.

An armed CHOLAK COMMANDER circles them, stopping at one of them. He places his hand under the warrior's chin. She shudders.

CHOLAK COMMANDER

Fear not my dear, it'll all be
over soon.

He's not wrong, as he draws her sword and with a single slice deftly severs her head.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

As it rolls away her body falls forward, landing in such a position that it appears as though she's buried her head in the sand - her neck flat against the surface.

D'bronze makes a noise, fury rising in him, barely escaping, but it's enough to alert the Cholak. The sinister commander approaches him and kneels.

CHOLAK COMMANDER (CONT'D)

What have we here?

He raises D'bronze's head a little and examines his features. He's impressed.

CHOLAK COMMANDER (CONT'D)

The heart of a true warrior burns
in this one.

He looks closer and is surprised.

CHOLAK COMMANDER (CONT'D)

Interesting... You, you are a
Mazakelli, am I right?

No response.

The Commander raises the sword and D'bronze prepares for the worst, but only gets the hilt SLAMMED into his face - splitting his lip.

His eyes blacken and his canines extend, but he quickly shakes it off.

CHOLAK COMMANDER (CONT'D)

You have some fight in you. You
may as well tell me, are you or
are you not, of the Mazakelli's?

Still no response.

This time the commander ups the stakes, holds the blade to the neck of the male warrior next to D'bronze and presses just hard enough to produce a little blood.

CHOLAK COMMANDER (CONT'D)

Tell me or he dies.

Knowing that the commander isn't bluffing, D'bronze reluctantly nods.

With a smile, the commander retracts his blade slightly then LUNGES forward, ramming it straight through the warrior's throat.

The warrior GASPS but it's no use, the blade is pulled free and the warrior falls backwards - dead.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHOLAK COMMANDER (CONT'D)
 (to the Cholak warriors)
 Take the others away.

He walks away, tossing the sword to one side so that it sticks in the sand.

D'bronze and the others are roughly forced to their feet and frogmarched off in the direction of the compound.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. INTERROGATION BLOCK - CORRIDOR - DAY

D'bronze wakes with a start.

Just as a pale hand comes into shot, toward him. A still foggy D'bronze instinctively and forcefully grabs it. Stopping it from coming any further.

UVERE
 It's only me.

Now fully awake, D'bronze sheepishly retracts his hand from Uvere's wrist.

D'BRONZE
 (rubbing his eyes)
 What the fress ya want?

UVERE
 It's Samuel. He wants to talk to you. Alone.

D'bronze absorbs this new information with interest.

INT. ALEXANDRA'S ROOM - SNOWFELT PALACE - DAY

There's the sound of running water as we PAN passed an understated but elegant room.

Chardonnae patiently stands just outside the open door:

INT. BATHING QUARTERS - ALEXANDRA'S ROOM - DAY

Tendrils of black swirl in the water as it circles the drain.

A fully clothed Alexandra perches on a bath, a flexible showering unit spraying water, washing her hair. A thick green towel wrapped around her shoulders.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Satisfied, she flicks the side of it, stopping the spray.

She watches as the last of the black dye drips from her now blonde hair.

CHARDONNAE

Now that's the old Alex I remember.

ALEXANDRA

(raises an eyebrow)

As long as it'll stop your constant attempts to-

CHARDONNAE

What gave you the impression I was done?

ALEXANDRA

(confused)

What more could I possibly do?

CHARDONNAE

Enjoy life. That's what.

(off Alexandra)

Pack light.

(cheeky grin)

You're not going to be needing much clothes where we're heading.

We STAY ON Alexandra's unsure expression at that.

EXT. LANDING PLATFORM - DAY

The Savant stands next to a shuttle. An entourage of rakesh surrounding him.

SAVANT

We ssshall find the Eye firsst.

The Savant clicks open a holoprojector to reveal a projection of a valley.

A sleek black rakesh, SEP V'SAPSUS, bows his head as he approaches.

V'SAPSUS

What of the miinisssh? We cannot expect them to honour Raloth'ss orderss.

An albino rakesh, CHIEF SEP SUROK, loudly hisses intermittently, jostling him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUROK

You fear thossse foul sssmelling
brenokss? They will probably wind
up losst in a nessesst of cave
ssspiderss.

All the other rakesh join him in hissing their amusement.

SAVANT

Enough.

The rakesh quieten immediately.

SAVANT (CONT'D)

(to someone unseen)

What do you think?

A brown haired, scruffy feratu man, KEBBEL, steps into shot.

KEBBEL

I'd say you take the east gully
entrance. You'll cover the M'gulg
breadth in two solar days while
the miinish are still stuck
wading through the swamps.

SAVANT

(eyes him)

Any dangerssss?

KEBBEL

(shrugs)

Sand vipers, traxan raiders and
possibly othmogs. But your men-
(corrects himself)
serpents, can handle that.

Keibel points to two blue dotted lines blinking on the projection.

KEBBEL (CONT'D)

Stick to those routes and you'll
be clear of most threats to your
safety.

Surok hisses contemptuously.

SUROK

Why should we trusst you
Kesshata?

(to other rakesh)

He could lead usss into a trap
for his fellow blood fiendsss.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KEBBEL

(rolls his eyes)

I don't give a fress who wins the war numatov. Those dacons are all that concerns me.

The Savant looks to SEP TULOC, a green skinned rakesh with black stripes.

SAVANT

Tuloc lead our team through the valley. Ensssure nothing getsss in the way. Leasst of all Ptolemussss' band of brenoksss.

TULOC

(bows respectfully)

Underssstood great Sssavant.

The Savant nods to Kebbel.

SAVANT

You will guide Tuloc'sss team through the M'gulg valley. The other half of your payment made on sssuccessful completion of the misssion.

KEBBEL

Understood. As long as I'm paid on time I'd guide ya to harn and back.

He turns to follow a slithering Tuloc. Surok turns and leans in almost conspiratorially to the Savant.

SUROK

Do you trussst that kessshata?

SAVANT

It matterssss not. He iss sssimply a tool.

(off Surok)

Tuloc hass orderssss to tear him apart ssshould he betray uss.

Surok contentedly hisses at this piece of information.

EXT. STREETS - GIRABALDI PROVINCE

The streets themselves are a sign of the unfortunate lack of wealth this area seems to be suffering. The people seem glum and there's very little in the way of lighting in the underground city.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A djibou military vehicle races past us, blowing up a storm of dust as it does so.

SAMUEL (V.O.)
Drakans, it was drakans.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - OUTPOST - EVENING

A small window shows the suns going down in the distance, but neither D'bronze nor Samuel pay any attention.

D'bronze raises an eyebrow.

D'BRONZE
What did they offer ya?

SAMUEL
Money. A lot of money.

D'BRONZE
Ya sold ya soul for money? To a fressin' drakan!

His temper is getting the better of him but he manages to calm himself down as he grips the table.

SAMUEL
Said there were bombs they wanted placing, gave me enough to do the job. Problem was they were old, dust got everywhere and the others started looking for what was causing it.

D'BRONZE
So ya hid them?

SAMUEL
No one uses stun mines at the academy, I thought it'd be fine.

D'BRONZE
'cept you got pulled out for trainin' and those mines came with ya. Accident?

Sam nods.

SAMUEL
Not that you'll believe me but yes. They weren't meant for here.
(beat)
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

You have to understand, my family
have a blood farm, had it since
the golden ages -

D'BRONZE

And it ain't payin' the bills
like it used to.

D'bronze has apparently got some knowledge on the issue,
but he doesn't elaborate.

SAMUEL

We worked up a debt, the money
would help. My family, they're
desperate.

D'bronze can't help but feel a little admiration for the
boy who has done everything for his family. There is, of
course, a burning question.

D'BRONZE

Did ya plant any bombs?

Samuel looks up, guilty.

BLACK OUT:

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

EXT. STREETS - GIRABALDI PROVINCE

As before, we track the vehicle as it races through the streets and see that D'bronze and Uvere are at the helm.

D'BRONZE

Come on...

UVERE

You sure we're going to the right place? Kid's a would-be terrorist, I wouldn't trust his word.

(beat, off look)

I wouldn't... you might.

He smiles in an attempt to break the tension but D'bronze simply turns back to the road.

We CLOSE UP on D'bronze's face as he keeps his eyes on the dark stone road ahead, before we:

FLASH TO:

INT. CHOLAK CELLS - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Looking a little worse for wares, but relatively unharmed, D'bronze sits in a dank cell with his back pressed against the stone wall.

His fellow prisoners are looking not so well off, each of the warriors showing signs of torture and beating.

One of them is brought back to the cell by armed guards, the door opened just long enough to toss the unconscious man inside and close it again.

None of the others move to help the fallen man, they're all too weak to move at this stage, so the job falls to D'bronze.

He kneels next to the man, shakes him gently until he begins to stir and tries to lift him.

D'BRONZE

C'mon, help me get ya up.

The man wakes up, sees D'bronze and violently lunges at him.

D'bronze barely has time to move as the well built man pounces on him and begins to throw punch after punch.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

It's all D'bronze can do, not to retaliate, and he's forced to just kick him away and retreat.

D'BRONZE (CONT'D)
What the fress?!

The man, ARMUS, grits his sharpened teeth.

ARMUS
Ya sold us out!

D'BRONZE
What? I'm right here with ya.

FEMALE WARRIOR
They haven't touched ya.

She isn't looking at him, she's gazing at the wall near him, though her eyes are vacant - she's blind.

FEMALE WARRIOR (CONT'D)
Not once. The commander
recognized ya. *Traitor.*

Appalled, but not entirely shocked by the claim, D'bronze makes no attempt to defend himself.

He just hides away in the corner, in an attempt to avoid the accusing eyes of his former friends.

The Commander arrives outside the cell, rattling the bars as he does.

The prisoners watch him, wondering who he's come to take next, but he doesn't open the cage doors.

CHOLAK COMMANDER
You're in luck. Your friends have
agreed to our demands.

He begins to walk away but stops just long enough to look at the distraught D'bronze in the corner.

He smirks, then carries on his way out of the cell area.

With him gone, the prisoners sit in silence, they're too far gone to be celebrating now. These warriors are broken.

OFF the warriors' barely lessened despair.

EXT. RAINFOREST - DAY

The colourful and tropical greenery of a typical rainforest LOOMS up as a grey shuttle swoops overhead.

EXT. POOLSIDE - CHARDONNAE'S MANSION - DAY

A shirtless Chardonnae soaks up the sun in a deck chair alongside a massive azure pool. He sips from a bright green drink.

We SWITCH FOCUS to Alexandra in a modest one piece bathing suit. She seems almost uncomfortable as she sits on the edge of the pool, close to Chardonnae's chair. Her feet skimming it's surface.

ALEXANDRA

I think I might just go for a walk-

CHARDONNAE

At least hear the end of my amusing anecdote.

Alexandra sighs dramatically.

ALEXANDRA

If I must.

CHARDONNAE

Where was I? Oh right.

(beat)

Then one of the mother's screams, "this story isn't appropriate for children at all!". I turn to her all innocence and light and say-

(pauses)

It isn't? But I keep my clothes on in this version.

Alexandra gives him a curious "that's all?" look at the punch line.

ALEXANDRA

What actually happened after that?

CHARDONNAE

Turned out her husband was an air rail guard. I got tossed at the next stop but not before securing myself a weeken schedule absolutely full of carnal delights.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He waggles his eyebrows suggestively as he sips from his green drink once more. Alexandra laughs.

ALEXANDRA

There are females out there who
still fall for that?

Chardonnae leans back in his chair closing his eyes.

CHARDONNAE

Not just females.
(smirks)
They can't get enough of my
irresistible charm.

Alexandra bends forward, scooping up some water from the pool with her hands. She turns, hitting Chardonnae straight in the face with a SPLAT.

CHARDONNAE (CONT'D)

You know-
(opens his eyes)
This means war.

With an almost super human lunge, he jumps from his chair and pushes Alexandra into the pool with a SPLASH.

With a laugh she kicks up water, spattering Chardonnae.

EXT. HOTEL - GIRABALDI PROVINCE

The word swanky comes to mind, far from the poorer areas of the province this is much more like it. This is the place for the social and economic elite to gather.

INT. HOTEL CORRIDOR - SAME

The inside is a little less impressive than the brightly lit, perfectly presentable outside, but enough effort has been made to make this place the best of the best.

A smartly dressed man, SENATOR HEROS walks down the corridor with his ASSISTANT in tow.

SENATOR HEROS

Tell them I want the break with
the Imperial Covenant complete as
soon as possible. I've worked too
long to get them away from the
Drakans to waste time now.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ASSISTANT

Yes sir.

They stop walking as they reach an unmarked door.

SENATOR

Is this mine?

ASSISTANT

Yes sir, they've been holding it for your arrival for a weeken now. Nobody in, nobody out, just as you requested.

He smiles and reaches for the door handle.

INT. SENATOR'S ROOM - SAME

We see that there is a bomb waiting for him on the other side of the door - the pressure sensor is armed.

EXT. HOTEL - GIRABALDI PROVINCE

People dressed in the most expensive clothing, the elite, talk amongst themselves outside the hotel doors.

They're shocked as D'bronze's vehicle pulls up beside them, smashing into an expensive looking vehicle belonging to one of the guests.

He climbs out, as does Uvere and marches towards the doors ignoring the protests of the various guests.

D'BRONZE

There's a bomb. If ya don't want to be in little bits, I'd fressin' run!

Startled by his lack of tact the guests don't know what to do.

FEMALE GUEST

(horrified)

Bomb?

UVERE

I'm sure there's nothing to worry about, but please get to somewhere -

There's a colossal BANG as an explosion interrupts him, but it's not in the hotel.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Everyone looks up to where another hotel is ABLAZE.

One that's not quite so upscale as this but they've made a heck of an effort, that's now going up in flames.

Realization dawns on D'bronze and Uvere as the guests run inside - screaming. They've been had.

As the sirens begin to go off and people scream, D'bronze just watches in horror as the flames LICK the other building.

INT. DETENTION TRANSPORT VEHICLE

Samuel sits in the back of the armored vehicle. His head bowed in regret. He doesn't sob anymore, not even a whimper, he doesn't even move.

We get a CLOSE UP of his face, without any sign of expression. All we can see is the grim determination in his eyes.

A TAN SHIRT, a law enforcement officer sits opposite him, watching him with disgust. We can hear voices from outside, D'bronze and Uvere.

EXT. STREET - GIRABALDI PROVINCE

The two are talking to another local TAN SHIRT just outside the transport. Another officer stands within earshot, ready to leave.

UVERE

You can voice us if you need anything on him. You have everything we have so you should get a conviction without any problem.

TAN SHIRT

Anything else?

D'BRONZE

No.

He looks into the back of the transport where Samuel is now sat. He's disappointed not just in the boy, but in himself.

D'BRONZE (CONT'D)

Take him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The officer nods and walks towards the side of the transport. He gets in and a moment later the engine fires up.

Uvere turns to D'bronze, about to say something but it's quite clear that there's nothing he can say.

INT. HEAD BUILDING - BRIEFING ROOM - DAY

Ptolemus, DRAKH and a few other miinish sit around a table in this small round chamber, deep in discussion.

PTOLEMUS

Be careful, the Savant will want to claim the Eye first.

DRAKH

(low)

He will do anything to succeed.

PTOLEMUS

I do not trust him but-

(beat; sighs)

Raloth has given orders that we are to work together.

(to his men)

No one draws blood. That's what the Savant wants. To show that we are incompetent savages.

A light brown furred miinish, COMMANDER ZESKIL, stands.

ZESKIL

Filthy numatovs! If they think they can win in this quest-

(thumps his chest)

We'll show 'em what true warriors of the Miinish Lord are capable of.

The other miinish grunt or nod eagerly in agreement.

PTOLEMUS

Fine sentiments Zeskil but keep your mind on the task. Locate the Eye. Don't let your feelings cloud your judgement. The rakesh expect us to fail. Do not give them that.

Ptolemus THUMPS his chest with his right hand keeping his arm out in front, a salute of some kind.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Zeskil and the others returning the gesture before they leave. Drakh looks to Ptolemus.

DRAKH

(low)

M'gulg's a dangerous place. The Savant's treachery is not the only obstacle.

PTOLEMUS

(nods)

True. But the Savant is certainly the most dangerous of them all.

We STAY ON Ptolemus' concerned expression.

INT. PUB - GIRABALDI PROVINCE

There's a homely almost run down feel to the place. Despite its worn floor boards and battered bar, the place is quite packed with clientele.

D'bronze empties his glass of its clear liquid. He turns as someone clears their throat.

UVERE

You know how long that takes to get out of your...

A trademarked death stare works as an "I don't care" and Uvere sighs - giving up.

D'BRONZE

Kid sold out his own for money. Fifty dead. Fifty.

UVERE

His family...

D'BRONZE

No. No excuse.

D'bronze motions for another drink and an unseen barman places one in front of him.

UVERE

Care to tell me why you took this one personally?

D'bronze just downs his drink and Uvere takes it as a no, turning back to the bar where his own drink sits half empty.

FLASH TO:

INT. PUB - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

A classic djibou pub, the mood is high and everybody's having a good time - all except D'bronze.

He downs a brightly coloured drink and winces at the bitter taste, slamming the glass back down on the bar and SMASHING it.

He looks down at his hand, no cuts. Realising that this was a bad idea he looks down the bar to where we see an old face - TREY - and we figure that this wasn't D'bronze's bad idea, but one of his little brothers.

The younger of the Mazakelli boys is doing his very best to sweet talk three girls at once, and somehow he seems to be managing.

All of them are draped around him, hanging on his every word as he laughs at and drinks to his own anecdotes.

Giving in, D'bronze walks over to where his little brother is sat and places a hand on his shoulder, cutting him off mid-sentence.

D'BRONZE

I'm payin' then I'm goin'.

TREY

(slurred)

Ya just got here!

His inability to talk would say otherwise, but D'bronze can't be bothered with pointing out that fact.

D'BRONZE

Don't give a slaug, I ain't in the mood.

Trey rolls his eyes and puts his hand into his pocket, producing a pouch.

D'BRONZE (CONT'D)

I don't want ya money.

TREY

Good, ya not gettin' it - pay for mine while ya there.

(beat)

And cover these lovely ladies too.

They giggle, D'bronze looks disgusted, and yet we get the distinct feeling that this is almost routine for him. His brother's antics apparently never change.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

D'BRONZE
 Whatever, try to make it back
 within the weeken.

He walks away from his brother, who has turned his
 attention back to his company for the evening.

DISSOLVE TO:

D'bronze as he talks to the BARMAN and hands over the money
 for his drinks, which we notice isn't a lot.

D'BRONZE (CONT'D)
 And my brena over there -
 (motions)
 Asked me to pay for him and his
 friends.

He opens up the pouch and pulls out a couple of coins,
 handing them over.

The barman looks at the coins and hands them back with a
 grim expression.

BARMAN
 I ain't here to judge, but don't
 play me for a pudanz.

D'bronze frowns, confused.

D'BRONZE
 What's the...

He looks at the coins. They bare a symbol - we've seen it
 before -

FLASH TO:

EXT. CHOLAK COMPOUND - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

The armor of the Cholak Commander, he turns and faces
 D'bronze as the head of the decapitated soldier rolls away
 and there's that symbol.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. PUB - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Back to D'bronze as he lets the coins fall to the floor. He
 looks down at them, confirming what he's seen.

His mind is racing as he tries to think of an explanation,
 but only one is remotely possible and he looks over at -

Trey.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He marches over to his brother, who's engaged in an old fashioned bit of necking with one of the girls.

D'bronze pulls his brother free and SLAMS him into the wall.

GIRL #1
What's your problem?

D'bronze SNAPS AROUND, his eyes black with fury, warding off the girls. They take the message and do a runner whilst everyone else watches the chaos unfold.

Turning his attention back to his brother D'bronze presses on his neck harder.

D'BRONZE
He recognised me because of ya!

TREY
I don't know what drez ya talkin' about!

D'BRONZE
Don't give me the usual act Trey.
I'm under investigation! They all think I'm a traitor but it was...you.

Trey breaks free of his brother's grasp and falls to the floor. He reaches into his jacket, leaving his hand there. His dark eyes can't meet D'bronze's.

TREY
I'm sorry.
(beat; softer)
Ya just kept comin' home with all the stories of glory from the battlefields... They got to me, said people were goin' to die anyway, so I thought, "hey, why not make a profit?".

D'bronze looks away, disgusted at his brother.

D'BRONZE
Get out.

TREY
D'-

D'BRONZE
Out!

Trey nods. He removes his hand from his jacket and reveals a small recording device. He presses a button:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TREY
(filtered; recording)
...why not make a profit?

D'bronze turns around as Trey throws it at his older brother, it's the proof he needs to clear his name.

TREY (CONT'D)
Always keep one, never know who
ya can blackmail.
(beat)
Goodbye, brother.

He walks past, patting D'bronze on the shoulder as he goes but D'bronze doesn't look up.

The door to the bar closes as Trey leaves.

D'BRONZE
Goodbye, Trey.

INT. PUB - GIRABALDI

D'bronze and Uvere sit in silence for a moment until a voice interrupts their brooding.

MAN(O.S.)
Chief Captain Mazakelli? The rear
guard sent for you.

The two of them turn around to see another tan shirt we'll call the LOCAL ENFORCER, in accordance to his position. It's all too clear why he's here.

D'BRONZE
What's happened?

The man makes no effort to hide that it most certainly isn't good.

OFF the tan shirt's grim expression.

EXT. STREETS - OUTSKIRTS - GIRABALDI PROVINCE

The streets are littered with vulturous bystanders trying to get a good look at the overturned detention transport.

The local tan shirts are doing their best to keep people back but they're distracted by three of their own lying dead against the vehicle - their necks slit execution style.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

D'bronze and Uvere approach the back of the vehicle where the door has been blown open.

Inside we see the bloodied hand of Samuel Walton - he's dead.

D'BRONZE
Fressin' drakans.

He notes the large shadowy figure that we assume is a dead Drakan inside the vehicle next to Samuel.

D'BRONZE (CONT'D)
That the only one?

A rear guard approaches and nods.

REAR GUARD
Was following them when something spooked them. By the time I got here, it was too late. All dead. I got the Drakan before he could get away.

UVERE
(shakes his head)
Dauchink.

They all stand there as the crowd noises fade away, the trio shutting themselves off from their surroundings.

D'bronze stares at Sam's hand, and finally the sympathy for the young man returns to his eyes just as, we:

FADE TO BLACK:

END OF SHOW