

# THE ZARION

Alone so very alone. There were only five of them left, scattered throughout the endless, relics from the old ways the times of the living legends.

Plexon knew that he would never see the others of his kind again. He would return to the dust here upon the cardinal world, one of four prophecy worlds where the stone cloisters almost touched the heavens. He had one last thing to do, a task that had been given to him a hundred cycles ago. His days as a master assassin were long behind him yet he knew that even now he would still be unstoppable, his kind had been created for one purpose only and that was to take life. He did not do this for pleasure or gain; this was simply a contract that came from the divine echoes of the ancients.

The cardinal gate loomed up over the traders and travellers seeking entrance into the citadel. Tektron Gate pointed to the valley where a single star would rise into the night sky, the forge star that had given birth to the lost planet Auriga. Many pilgrims came from across the endless to marvel at the stars rising as it ascended into the heavens and gently kissed the crescent moon of Tolos.

The Cardinal Gormalion blessed and healed the sick, distributed the wealth from the takers and the opportunists, protected the weak and vulnerable from the relentless new breed of Vodyani that took tainted essence that had not been purified and infused it into the core worlds. This observation had confused Plexon as he had followed the cardinal and his elite guards around the citadel. He could have consigned him to the void long ago but the cycles had passed and the echoes had reminded him of his contract. Yet the dilemma had chipped away at his soul, or what was left of it, until he could no longer postpone the charge that he had been given.



Vorzt had landed, choosing a remote site well away from prying eyes.

“The Zarion will be here soon, we just have to make sure that no one comes snooping around. We are off the grid and still cloaked so let’s get this done and return to the stars.”

The wind swept across the open plain and Talusa watched as the haze parted and the cardinal citadel shimmered under the relentless sun. This world off the beaten track, a hidden jewel amongst the sands that had become pitted and flawed but still a favourite amongst the outer peoples of the Vodyani dominion clusters.

“Where is he, he ought to have been here by now. Don’t get into a conversation with him, he does not like that and we don’t want to incur his wrath do we?”

Talusa felt the shifting sands under her feet, a very subtle vibration and she spun around, her hand already upon her staff and the other had started to withdraw her scith.

“You won’t need that my dear.”

Three legions had already surrounded the shape that had come up from the sands.

You gestured towards Talusa to hold and she gently replaced the scith.

“Commander you are looking well, I see that the cycles have been good to you, I trust that you have that what I require?”

“A simple nod, yes good he would relax now and we can get on with our business and be gone.”

The med cell had been offloaded and he had inspected it.

“Very good, you have done well. This favour will not go unnoticed, you had asked for no payment yet you have taken the risk.

The Zarion had placed the med cell inside his decaying essence, the containment tube still intact.

Plexon’s lower mouth smiled and he turned to face Talusa.

“Here my dear keep this for your commander.” The tentacle reached out and touched Talusa upon her forehead, such speed yet such grace that she could not have reacted to it even if she had so wanted to. The symbol upon her helmet faded seeping in to the essence that hid a remarkable beauty.

Plexon was gone returned to the sands and was already on his way back to the citadel; behind he could hear the sound of the ship as she lifted off back into the void and her journey amongst the stars.

Tekton gate was awash with the lost souls seeking whatever they needed. The forge star ceremony would be this night and Plexon had to prepare himself for the contract that he had taken so long ago. Far above the masses and the clambering vile, the cardinal sat in his chamber, he felt weak and so very tired but it was his shame that had tarnished his essence, a shame that he had failed the ones who he had been entrusted to look after, the elite and the profiteers had slowly but ruthlessly inserted themselves into the citadel and now he just wanted to rejoin the essence of his family’s tomb.



The sun had dipped sending out her crimson rays across the plain and washing the walls in a soft red hue. Cardinal Gormalion wanted this to be his last official ceremony, bless the poor and the desperate, reveal the light of the equinox and leave the vile to count out their profits. He would return to his chamber remove his garments and seek the sleep of the eternal.

The Zarion had already circumvented the elite guards and he now lay in wait inside the chamber at the top of the spire that overlooked the valley and the rising forge star. Far below the sounds of the masses echoed up into the cool night air.

The cardinal had entered his chamber leaving his guards to watch his door. The shadows swept around the ornate carvings that animated the carved heads of the shifters demons. One of the demons now moved towards him and he froze still, his good eye not quite believing the assertion upon his mind. Plexon had materialised into form and moved as if time were yet to be invented.

The cardinal thought that he was already dead, his essence now spilling upon the ground and his soul already making the journey back to the forge. His body would soon collapse crumpled and lifeless upon the stone floor yet this had not happened. The shadow had revealed itself and he looked into its face and saw something quite extraordinary, a young man a face that he had not seen in countless cycles, his face, and his youth. The Zarion had injected the essence from the med cell into him and he could already feel the effects.

Plexon left the chamber swept past the guards as a shadow and joined the night. He had fulfilled his contract not in the way that he was

supposed to but by giving a life for his own, he swept up across the valley and upwards into the atmosphere and the forge star. He had freed himself and now there were only four Zarions left in the endless.



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Colin Foster. 2019