A Vision from the Future

Monolith, Seraph

"What am I doing here?" Kai thought to himself as he walked down the corridor of the Monolith on Seraph. The constant stares and hushed voices didn't help. Though Kai knew the moment they started what had caused it. He couldn't help that, despite starting to grow his hair out, he was the youthful spitting image of his father, the Emperor. How could people not stare, given his old man's face was plastered all over this Sith monstrosity he had erected and the new city that already reeked of corporate abuse?

There had been only one reason that had brought him here and it lay ahead of him in the crowded medical corridor. A man, towering above him at nearly two meters, stood outside a doorway. His arms crossed and his hooded cloak drawn over his head. His bare arms, rippling with muscle, were crossed over his chest and he stared down anyone who dared look at the door.

"Master, I don't understand," Kai started. As the man turned, the barest flicker of a smile crossed his bearded face. Only Kai, who had spent most of his life in tutelage with the man, caught it. "Why are we here? The last time we were anywhere near the Caperion system we were fighting against these people. Why come here now and why aren't they arresting us?" Kai quizzed his Master. The man, who most people knew only as *The Warhawk* gestured with his thumb towards the door and stepped aside. Kai knew that yet again he wasn't going to get the simple answer.

Kai shook his head as the door opened. "Mother!" Kai screamed in excitement as he rushed into the room to give her a warm embrace. "What are you doing here? Are you hurt? Did they capture you?" Kai stepped back and searched for injury on his mom as the steady beeps of a medical bay filled his ears. HIs mom was shorter than him. Her auburn hair, in a messy bun, showed the encroaching gray. She wore her usual travel garb of pants, shirt, and a warm fluffy vest that Kai knew held more surprises than just the occasional treat she'd give them when they were children.

"There's more than just Mom here, you know," Komilia said, rising from a nearby seat and hugging her brother. Komilia, formerly a wannabe Mandalorian and personal security guard of their Father, looked different to Kai's eyes. She had the same long blondish hair and toned physique but there was now an age to her eyes. Clearly she had been through something that left a scar upon her in the Force. If not for the shock of seeing her again after so many years, Kai might have figured out what had happened.

"Milli," Kai exclaimed, embracing his sister. "What are you doing here? The last we had heard, our Father had banished you." Komilia grimaced as the memory of her failings flooded her mind.

"I'm here because of this," Komilia said, gesturing to the two bacta tanks across the room. In the larger of the two floated the partially nude body of their father. Emperor Kamjin Lap'lamiz bobbed with the bubbles in the tube as the life support equipment breathed for him and monitored his condition. Next to him, in a child-sized tube, floated his youngest son, Hikaru. Kai's eyes flew wide at the sight of his sibling.

"What did you do?" he snapped at Komilia.

"Kai, wait," Kya, their mother, began, moving between the two of them.

"He was in carbon freeze for his protection. Why would you bring him out?! We have no idea what is wrong with him," Kai continued, ignoring his mom.

"Would you shut up and listen before you start judging me," Komilia snapped back as she stepped away and took a defensive posture.

"Judging you? You judged us with your little runaway act all those years ago. Do you know what they did to Mom?"

"Yes, judging me, you pompous ass. Just because you're a *Jedi* you think you have a right to pass judgment on the rest of us."

"Be quiet, the both of you," Kya shouted, pushing both of them into the nearby seats. "Would you take a moment and listen? Kai and Komilia, stop flying off the handle over every little thing." Kya rubbed her face with the exhaustion of a mother who had spent a lifetime breaking up these fights. "Kai, look at the monitors for a moment."

Kai reluctantly looked around his mother at the monitors stationed between Hikaru and his Father. After a minute he shook his head and looked at his mother. "What am I supposed to be seeing?"

Kya walked over and pointed at two lines on one of the screens. "These are their brainwaves," she said. Kai watched and his mouth fell open.

"They're in sync."

"That's right. Whatever is happening, we think it's because of this," Kya continued, picking up a small glowing object. "They call it the Rajk Opal and somehow, across space and time, it connected your Father and Hikaru together. We're hoping that having them near it will help them heal. Komilia brought Hikaru here after hearing about your Father being shot."

"How did you hear about him being shot?" Kai asked Komilia.

"Oh," Komilia started, tucking her hair behind her ear. "I was…working on the Grand Master's yacht and heard about it from the old lady who was running the party." Kai stared dumbfounded at his sister. Why would Komilia be working a job? She had never shown any interest in the mundane ever since she learned that their father was a Duke of Alderaan and she assumed that meant something decades after his planet was reduced to space dust.

"So when do they wake up?" Kai asked, turning back to his mother. Kya shook her head.

"We don't know. The doctors have no idea what is happening and I refuse to let any of these Sith near them now for fear they'll kill them in their power struggles."

"Wait, where's Rohan?" Kai asked, having suddenly noticed that their last sibling wasn't present. As the third child, and second brother, Rohan had a headstrong attitude that usually got him into as much trouble as fun. At this question Kya looked at the floor. Komilia, sensing her mother's sorrow, spoke.

"He's taking our Father's place on Arx. I don't know the details but the Grand Master thinks he finally has the former Grand Master cornered and is launching some sort of battle. Rohan felt that he was needed there to represent the Lap'lamiz honor and to protect the innocent lives of Eos City."

Kai scoffed. Protecting the innocent? Nothing about their Father ever gave him the impression that a life-long Imperial warlord and Sith would want to protect the innocent. "Well, get him on the comms. He needs to be here for Hikaru."

Komilia and Kya shared a pained look. "What? What is it?" Kai pressed.

"We haven't been able to raise him for a while now and, from what little news is getting off the planet, it sounds like things have gotten bad," Komilia replied.

Kai looked at his sister and mother's faces. He could tell what was left unsaid. He turned to his father and brother. There was nothing he could do here, but maybe there was something he could do for his other brother. He embraced his mother and sister. "I'll go get him," he said as he left the room.

Kya burst out of the room after him, finding him already halfway down the corridor. "Kai, no, you'll be killed!" Kya yelled after her son. The medics in the corridor turned at the disturbance but, realizing who it was, quickly returned to their business. Kya stared up at *The Warhawk* guarding the door. "Stop him," she demanded.

"No," was all he said as he continued to guard the door. Tears began to fall from Kya's eyes. All her boys were in terrible peril and once again it was her estranged husband's fault.

Eos City, Arx

"Get that gear stowed before the Council arrives," Rohan said, helping a stormtrooper strapping down a crate in the back of a K79-S80 troop transport. Rohan thought the box speeder was one of the ugliest things ever created but it's what they had to work with.

"Thank you, sir," the trooper responded, tightening the strap and then hurrying off to get the next crate off the nearby hover pallet. Rohan adjusted his own helmet as he straightened up and took in the launching site. He had practically begged his father for a suit of stormtrooper armor when he first arrived, but he had never expected it to be so uncomfortable after being in the cold, muddy ground near Eos City. While the body glove was water and air tight, mud caked between it and the armor plates making it difficult to move if you stayed still for very long. The once dark green shoulder pauldron with the crest of Scholae Palatinae had quickly become torn and was now just a brown glop of dried mud on his shoulder. "Maybe I should have just stayed in robes," Rohan thought to himself as he moved on to the next vehicle for inspection.

Their assignment was simple, if not cryptic; the Grand Master was building a gate of some sort. They didn't know the exact details except that he expected to find the former Grand Master there and kill him. Rohan didn't care about the petty politics of the Sith but he knew that ending this would bring peace back to the people of Eos City and hopefully allow the Grand Master to focus his attention on the Children of Mortis who were the true threat.

To accomplish that feat, the various clans of the Brotherhood had assembled their forces to lead the invasion through this gate and bring an end to the conflict. Scholae Palatinae had been tasked with the logistics of the invasion, a testament to the industrial might his father had done within the Caperion system that so many of the supplies were coming from them rather than the Iron Legion. Though, Rohan suspected, that had more to do with the less-than-trustworthy Proconsul, Thran. Having verified the next K79-S80 was secure, he prepared to move on to the next when he felt something. A presence in the Force he hadn't felt since…. Wheeling around, he saw his brother, Kai, sneaking between the canisters. Rohan suppressed a laugh.

There were so many people here in cloaks from the various clans, including that weird Light Side clan that still served a Council made up of Sith and Imperials, that no one would have noticed another hooded figure walking through the camp. Yet, here he was, practically barrel

rolling between canisters trying not to be seen. Rohan couldn't take it anymore. "Hey, Kai, long time no see," he bellowed, as he took off his helmet. This blonde hair, cut short up the sides and combed over in a very military way, came out perfectly somehow from the helmet. Kai ignited his saber instantly, holding it two handed in front of him ready for an attack that wasn't coming. Rohan couldn't help himself now, doubling over in laughter. "You should see your face," he said, pointing at Kai's shocked expression, quickly looking for the would-be attacker who yelled at him.

"You poodoo!" Kai yelled at him, extinguishing his blade and walking over to his brother who was now nearly rolling on the ground in fits of laughter. "You scared me half to death. You could have completely blown my cover," Kai said, with all the seriousness of an elder brother chastising his sibling. Rohan straightened up, wiping the tears from his face.

"Cover? What cover? No one knows you're here and you were being way more suspicious with that wannabe spy stuff than if you just walked in," Rohan said, pulling his brother into a quick hug.

"Ugh, you're built like a Gundark now," Kai said as his brother crushed him. "Are you okay?" Kai asked, grimacing at the sight of his younger brother in stormtrooper armor.

"Of course I'm fine," Rohan replied, beating his chest and sending a shower of dirt towards his brother. "I don't know why we thought this stuff was junk. It does a decent job protecting you."

Kai coughed as he backed away. "Go-good," he said between hacks. "Come on then. Let's get out of here and back to Mom."

Rohan stared at his brother for a moment. "Why?" was all he could muster by way of rebuttal. Kai stared at him, equally perplexed.

"Why? 'Cause we don't belong here," Kai said, gesturing at the Imperial equipment Scholae Palatinae had stationed all around them. "This is the madness of the Sith and Hikaru needs us."

"Hikaru woke up?" Rohan asked with curiosity.

"No…wait, you know about Hikaru?"

"Of course I do. Milia told me all about it when she got there and I saw him and Dad before I left."

"You know they're both in bacta tanks?"

"Sounds like you're the one who's out of the loop. I know all about it. Duk briefed me on it before I left."

"Who is Duk?" Kai was struggling to keep up with just how much his brother knew.

"Duk. Duk is Duk. He's Dad's apprentice," Rohan said, putting his hands on his hips as he stared at his brother. "Did you run off again without thinking?"

"I…no. What do you know then?" Kai asked, trying to regain control of the situation.

"This is it, Kai. They've finally got a portal to the Ethereal Realm. They're going to end all of it," Rohan said, excited to know more than his big brother.

"What's the Ethereal Realm?" Kai asked.

"Remember all those legends *The Warhawk* would tell us during our training trips into the wilderness? It's like the World Between Worlds but a physical manifestation. I don't know the details but scuttlebutt is this could be the big showdown," Rohan said. "The gateway is over

there," he gestured a short way off behind a large tower of equipment. Kai could see the beams of high intensity lights shining through the cracks.

"Show me," Kai said. Rohan shrugged and led the way. As they approached, Rohan flashed a security clearance badge and motioned Kai past the guards into a wide circle with a massive gateway on a platform. Kai felt a pit in his stomach looking at the inky black swirling mass contained within the gateway. It felt cold and unnatural in the Force. "You can't seriously think this is a good idea," Kai said, staring from the gateway to his brother.

Rohan shrugged. The small army of technicians continued their work preparing the gateway. As dials and levers were pushed the gateway's inky complexion flexed like someone or something was trying to pierce the veil. "Look, I don't care if it's a good idea or not. There's a lot of people from Scholae Palatinae here and I want to make sure they're okay. The rest of it," Rohan said, gesturing around them, "that's for the Council to decide."

"Do you hear yourself? The Council to decide? When did you buy into this? Mom spent our whole lives trying to keep our heads clear from this confusing and dangerous world of Dad's and here you are, bought in like a fool," Kai said. Rohan didn't have a chance to respond as a squad of troopers bearing the crest of the Brotherhood appeared.

"Halt! You are not authorized to be here," the lead trooper commanded, pointing at Kai.

"There's some misunderstanding," Rohan said, raising his security clearance. "He's with me."

"He is a known Jedi and rebel sympathizer. His arrest warrant is listed throughout the Brotherhood for his association with known terrorists in the Caperion system. Put your hands in the air or we will shoot," the trooper continued, raising his blaster.

Kai didn't wait for Rohan to try and continue to talk his way through this. In moments his lightsaber was in his hand, the icy blue blade deflecting the blaster bolts that came roaring at him. Despite his lack of respect for the Brotherhood, he had to appreciate their precision. "No," Rohan roared, his own emerald green lightsaber roaring to life but held aloft in his confusion as to whom to help. The technicians fled in panic as the ricocheting blaster bolts crashed into their equipment, setting it ablaze.

"Get out of here," Rohan yelled, motioning for them to escape as the fire spread to the walls of canisters stacked around the gateway. Kai regretted his actions as he realized he was trapped. Between the burning canisters and the rush of additional troopers to the scene, he had nowhere to go. Rohan was behind the troopers, helping the techs flee, and Kai knew now there would be no justice for him within the Brotherhood if he surrendered.

Kai looked behind him. "This may be the dumbest thing I ever do," he muttered as crouched and let the Force propel him in a reverse somersault into the gateway. The last thought through his mind was that he had a bad feeling about how it felt.

The World Between Worlds, Unknown

Kamjin thought he was still asleep as he opened his eyes. All around him was darkness. He rubbed the sleep out of his eyes and slowly started to notice the white outlines around him and what looked like distance stars. As far as he could see there were paths of light that led to circles with strange and mysterious shapes.

He had no idea where he was. The last thing he remembered was walking towards the Hutt and their representative hoping to bring an end to the Hutt influence in the Caperion system. Then there was a loud noise before silence. Wait, he'd been shot! He frantically reached for his chest but felt no pain. Stranger still, he wasn't wearing his red Imperial armor. If he didn't know better it looked like he was wearing an old training gi from when he first joined the brotherhood. It was plain white in a style similar to the old Jedi order with a sash around his waist with a black stripe signifying he had taken the first steps in the Shadow Academy towards the Sith order.

"Hello, Father," a youthful voice said behind him. Kamjin wheeled around, facing a boy of about ten with a mess of black hair with haunting spectral eyes. Kamjin recognized the face after a time, though he had last seen it as a babe.

"You take after your Mother, Hikaru," Kamjin said, looking at his youngest son whom he had last seen when Kya, his beloved wife, had taken him and his other children, fearing his influence and desire to send Kai to the Shadow Academy. Hikaru had been just a child but now…. "You're…ten?" Kamjin said, by way of starting a conversation.

"Twelve, but time here has no meaning," Hikaru replied cryptically.

"Where is here? How long have we been here?"

Hikaru walked closer, looking up into his father's face as a myriad of thoughts played across his own. Kamjin looked back, haunted to see so much of his beloved wife's face in the boy's and the loss of so much time. "You're not a lost cause yet," Hikaru said after a while and started walking off along the strange lighted path.

Kamjin shook his head and followed. "What do you mean? You're not thinking like your Mother that I need to be saved from the 'Dark Side'," Kamjin said.

"No, that is not what I mean," Hikaru said, taking a fork in the path.

"Then speak plainly. Clearly your Mother has been teaching you that damnable Jedi skill of double talk," Kamjin said, taking in his surroundings. Hikaru appeared to be dressed in the same manner of himself, though his sash was pure white. He rose nearly to Kamjin's chest but it seemed clear he was going to be short like his mother. They walked past several portals before Kamjin noticed that there were scenes from the past playing out. AT-STs crunched through the forest moon of Endor, evaporating Ewoks who fled deeper into the trees. The Super Star Destroyer Avenger traversing through the Unknown Regions seeking the couriers of an unknown message to the Emperor's Hammer. His own fight Shadow on the lighthouse of Ragnath before he faked her death and claimed the throne of the Empire for himself.

"Can we leave through one of these portals?" Kamjin asked.

"Yes…and no," Hikaru responded before coming to a stop before a shattered portal. "When I said you weren't a lost cause yet, I referred to the damage done by this portal." Hikaru pointed to the shattered pieces of glowing light that spread out from the portal.

Kamjin stooped down for a closer look. "These look like the opal," he said, careful not to touch the shards. Hikaru nodded.

"What you refer to as the Rajk Opal is a remnant of this shattered portal that ended up in our realm several hundred years ago. It retained a portion of its power but, just like if you look into a shattered mirror, what was reflected was broken. Connections were made that shouldn't have been. The image distorted dangerously in ways nature didn't intend," Hikaru said and with

a gesture of his hand the shattered pieces rose in the air, reforming themselves into the portal with a fist size hole remaining where the Rajk Opal should have been.

"When you poured the Force into it, it took a portion of your mind into this place. You began to exist out of sync with the rest of reality. At times you were yourself, the highly trained Imperial officer and Emperor of Scholae Palatinae. At others, a bumbling buffoon. It's why that assassin was able to shoot you and why your mind is no longer tethered to your body."

"Then I'm dead?" Kamjin asked, matter-of-factly.

"No…and yes," Hikaru replied. "What you need to do is find the shattered part of you that the Opal ripped free and make yourself whole again," Hikaru said, kneeling on the ground to meditate.

"If that's what happened to me, then why are you here?" Kamjin asked. Hikaru opened an eye and shrugged.

"The Force led me here."

"Led you here?" Kamjin asked in disbelief.

"You know better than I that the Force works in ways we cannot comprehend," Hikaru said, closing his eye again and exhaling.

Kamjin threw up his arms in disgust. He had never liked meditation except when there was a battle that he needed to focus on. He knelt down next to his son in a similar pose. The first time they had been this close since he had been born.

"You'll find the battle you seek," Hikaru said as Kamjin closed his eyes and the World Between Worlds disappeared.

Eos City, Arx (?)

Kai opened his eyes to carnage. The city was aflame. The sound of blaster fire and explosions echoed through the streets. "Oh kark, I've really gone and done it," Kai thought as he sat up. The gateway was gone and the canister walls looked like they had long since been burned to char. "Where am I?" Kai asked, pushing himself off the ground. He swayed like a newborn Ronto as he got to his feet. His head was pounding. He clipped his lightsaber to his belt as he set off to find his brother.

Rohan must have figured out a way to evacuate all the techs and settled the troopers, otherwise he would be in irons. Yet, if that was the case, why had the situation deteriorated so quickly? Kai could make out the sound of TIEs screeching through the sky, strafing fire down in the distance while the sound of shouting and AT-AT feet were coming closer.

"He's over here," Kai heard a voice cry from the distance. Kai's lightsaber was in his hand in a moment, except the icy blue blade now glowed a disturbing blood red. Troopers bearing the crest of Scholae Palatinae appeared, shouldering their weapons and saluting. "Lord Lap'lamiz, we feared you were lost when your ship went down."

"I am not my Father. What are you talking about? I wasn't in a ship," Kai said, holding his saber in front of him to keep the troopers away. The troopers looked at each other before the lead one removed her helmet.

"My Lord, we know you're not your Father. Emperor Lap'lamiz is closing in on Grand Master Evant's position as we speak. You were sent with the airwing to establish air superiority

when you were shot down. I'm Sergeant Lina. My squad was sent to rescue you and bring you to the Emperor," Lina said, gesturing towards the confused troopers.

"That's impossible, my Father is in a bacta tank on Seraph and the Grand Master hasn't been seen for months and my Father was a loyal follower of his. Why would he be attacking the Grand Master?" Kai asked, his blade wavering.

"My Lord, that was twenty years ago. The Emperor was healed yet the conflict that occurred at that time drove the Grand Master mad when he could not find his former leader, Telaris. He lashed out, destroying the Council and most of the Consuls. Your father has been fighting to conquer the Brotherhood ever since," Lina said slowly.

"Twenty…years?" Kai said. He turned and saw his reflection in a broken window of a building. He looked exactly like his Father. His moppy hair was cut back short in a military style, his face had aged and most shocking of all, he saw the haunted shadows of the Dark Side under his eyes. "NOOO!" Kai cried, dropping his saber.

"My Lord, you are okay. You're safe. Quick, bring me a bacta shot," Lina ordered. A medic rushed forward, offering her the syringe. She took it and plunged it into Kai's arm as he crumpled to the ground. "We have to get moving. This position isn't secure and we have to meet up with your Father. We're ending this today. One way or the other," Lina said, lifting Kai to his feet.

"Yes, perhaps my Father will know what is happening," Kai said, picking up his saber. Lina looked at him, wary of another outburst. Kai knew that look. It was the look he'd seen people give his father. It was fear and he felt it through the Force and he retched as he took joy in the feeling. Lina hastily stepped away. She returned her helmet to her head to hide her disgust and block the smell. "I'm okay. I'm okay. Let's get moving," Kai said, spitting.

The troopers formed up around Kai as they marched through the city. Lina stayed next to him as if she were his personal guard. After a considerable time and several narrow encounters with enemy forces, Kai risked asking the question he was dreading. "Where are my siblings? Is Rohan here?"

"Sir?" Lina asked, clearly uncomfortable.

"Where are my Fath…the Emperor's other children?" Kai rephrased his question.

"Sir, they're dead," Lina replied cautiously as one who had been raised around the Sith would.

"Dead? How could they be dead? I was with Rohan just a few minutes ago…" Kai stopped himself. "But that was twenty years ago…"

Lina nodded. "Tell me how they died?" Kai asked, fearful of the answer. Lina was thankful she wore the helmet to hide her reaction to how her Lord was behaving.

"The Emperor's youngest son died at the same time the Emperor was healed. Some think he sacrificed himself to save his Father, but no one knows for sure. Komilia was killed by Sykes Jade, once a loyal follower of your Father. He had tasted her 'soup' and once an Anzati has drunk your 'soup' they are never satisfied until they drain it all from you. Emperor Lap'lamiz killed him personally for the betrayal," Lina responded.

"What of Rohan?" Kai pressed. Lina checked her scope as they prepared to round another corner. "What of Rohan?" Kai asked again, as Lina gave directions to her troopers to fan out.

"We're nearly to the Emperor's position," Lina said as an explosion rocked the ground and the sound of clashing sabers reverberated through the city.

Kai grabbed Lina and turned her to face him, ripping off her helmet. "What happened to Rohan?" Kai demanded as he felt his anger welling up inside of him.

Lina gulped. "My Lord…you killed him."

The World Between Worlds, Unknown

"Is something supposed to be happening? Kamjin asked. His knees were hurting, which he found impossible given he could look through the supposed floor into the void. Hikaru didn't answer. Kamjin sprawled out on the ground, staring up at the intersecting lighted paths above him. "This is a waste of time. Why can't we go through a different portal and stop this one from shattering in the first place?" Kamjin asked, to still no response.

"This is hopeless," Kamjin moaned, rolling over and pushing himself up. His son remained motionless to his tirade. Kamjin was a man of action. He had always been a man of action and sitting here trying to feel the Force in this haunted realm wasn't accomplishing anything. Staring down at his son he threw his hands up in disgust and stormed off. There had to be another solution to this problem. He could feel now that a piece of himself was missing, but he was no closer to finding it.

As he strolled he took in the events captured in the other portals. A youthful boy piloting an X-wing fighter down the Death Star trench. Kya, his beloved and estranged wife, receiving a briefing from the New Republic Intelligence Agency to spy on a rising Imperial officer in the Emperor's Hammer. He lingered here for a while, looking at the youthful vision of his wife. Were they ever so young? He had known immediately that she was a spy yet he didn't care. What he hadn't known was that she was Force sensitive. If he had, would he have done things differently? Could he have turned her to the Dark Side if he had known it was an option?

But, if he changed something, would the future have turned out how it had? He shook his head and continued on. He saw himself floating in the bacta tank next to Hikaru. Komilia and Kya holding hands, asleep in the chairs watching them. Did she still love him or simply fear for her son? As he pondered, off in the distance a portal flashed as if a battle was being waged. Drawn away from the peaceful vision of his wife and daughter Kamjin let himself be pulled towards this new portal.

Through it he saw a massive battle being waged. TIEs and A-9 Vigilances danced through the sky igniting each other into fireballs. The vision changed and he saw himself. No, not himself. Kai, though he looked exactly as Kamjin did now. A blood red saber in his hand, fighting against the forces of the Children of Mortis and the Brotherhood. Wait, this was confusing. The Children of Mortis were fighting with Evant? What madness was this?"

"You see a possible future," Hikaru said. Kamjin jumped. How had his son snuck up on him? The Force definitely was not with him in this place.

"Possible future?"

"Yes, in this reality Evant was driven mad by not finding Telaris. He struck down the Council and most of the Consuls. It was later that he met with the Seer and formed an alliance with the Children of Mortis who claimed they could bring Telaris to him. In this reality, you lead the resistance with what remains of the Brotherhood against Evant."

Kamjin stared at his son. "How do you know this?"

Hikaru remained impassive. Kamjin turned back to the conflict. He saw himself, his hair fully gray with a deep scar across his face. A mechanical arm held his saber staff as the purple blade cut down the Children of Mortis's abominations. Yet, it was clear that it was a losing battle. Evant, corrupted by the Seer's manipulations, was going to prevail.

"Is this future set in stone?" Kamjin asked. Hikaru's face remained stoic. "Damnit, son. You have to say something. Answer me!" Kamjin demanded. Hikaru didn't flinch.

"Fine, I am going to put an end to this. Save myself," he said, though unconsciously he said 'and save my other son'.

"If you go through there you will be less than yourself," Hikaru finally responded.

"What do you mean?"

"You didn't enter this realm whole of body. Therefore, you cannot leave it in that manner. Not until we've repaired what was broken."

Kamjin stared at the portal and the unfolding battle. "So, if I leave I'll be a Force Ghost?" Kamjin said, referencing the legends told by the Sith of Jedi returning from the dead. Palpatine had written on the subject following his own rebirth in the tomes guarded by Scholae Palatinae.

"Yes…and no," Hikaru replied. Kamjin was getting really frustrated with the non-answers from his son.

"If I do nothing will Kai die?"

Hikaru returned to silence as he knelt on the path to meditate again.

"If I do nothing will he live?"

Hikaru folded his hands in his lap and closed his eyes.

Kamjin screamed. "When I get back you and I are going to have a conversation about giving straight answers," Kamjin threatened as he stepped through the portal.

Eos City, Arx (?)

Kai felt the beads of sweat flow from his face as his lightsaber blade was forced slowly closer to his head. The crystal monsters somehow were able to withstand a lightsaber blade, something he thought was impossible. While they weren't immune, as the blade slowly melted the crystal, these creatures felt no pain.

"Down," Lina screamed, and Kai let himself fall backwards as a blast from an E-Web shattered the being that was bent on killing him. "We've got to go," Lina said, pointing at the battle nearby. A woman with a weird animal skull on her head was cackling as Evant, wielding the legendary crimson bladed Caliburnus, battled his father. Kai hadn't recognized him with the mechanical arm and gray hair, but the eyes. Those haunted yellow-red Sith eyes. Those he recalled from his father.

Kai felt the Force surge through him. It felt easier to call upon it. Was that the call of the Dark Side or some effect of going through the gateway? He ran, faster than Lina could keep up, and leapt onto the platform. His father spun his lightstaff with his mechanical arm deflecting incoming blaster fire while his remaining human hand let rip Force Lightning towards Evant. The Grand Master caught it with his own blade before sending a blast of Lightning towards Kamjin.

Kamjin was slow to react and the electricity danced across his armor as he was knocked backwards. His lightstaff dropped from his hand.

"Kill him. He's the Maverick you've sought for so long," the Seer taunted Evant. Evant's eyes were glazed over as he approached Kamjin.

"Yes, Telaris…Mav…you're right. It is him," Evant muttered. His saber raised above his head. "I have finally found you. This will end now!" Evant exclaimed.

Kai prepared to leap to his father's defense but time froze. Kai looked around, stunned as the battle hung suspended. Blaster bolts were frozen in mid-air. TIEs had fireballs protruding like filling bursting from a pastry. "What has…" Kai muttered.

"Son, this isn't right."

Kai spun around and saw the ghostly image of his father. "You can't be dead?" Kai said, his mind reeling thinking it was his father's Force Ghost before he remembered his father wasn't a Jedi and could not come back in that manner. Nor did he look like the Sith spirits he had encountered, burning, ashen remnants of their former selves. Kamjin was somewhere in between. A half formed spirit floating with a reddish hue.

"What is happening?" Kai asked.

"I don't know the details but I know we don't have much time."

"I have to save you. I can defeat Evant."

"How? He's immensely more powerful than you."

"It's this place. The Force seems stronger than before and…" Kai ignited his red blade. "I know I have the power to defeat him."

Kamjin studied his son's face. While he had mastered the art of drawing upon the Dark Side without being corrupted, Kai drank from it like a Gungan in a desert. His face whitened while the blood vessels in his face bludged with blackened energy. His eyes became yellowed and bloodshot. "I will defeat him and I'll bring peace to the Brotherhood," Kai said, the glint of ambition upon his face.

"No, that is not your destiny. But I know whose it is," Kamjin said, reaching out an ethereal arm and lifting his son's body from the ground.

"You can't do this. I finally understand you. I have the power to save everyone. To save you!" Kai screamed as a fog rose from his body. Like the juice of a ripe meiloorun slowly leeching through the skin, a mirrored image of Kamjin was drawn away from his son.

"There you are," Kamjin said, as the haunted image merged with his own body. Kai, returned to his normal youthful appearance, shielded his eyes from the light emanating from Kamjin's spectral form. Then, there was darkness.

Monolith, Seraph

Komilia roused her mother from an uneasy sleep. "Mother, wake up. Something is going wrong," Komilia pleaded as Kya became conscious of the blaring alarms. Medics and medical droids were rushing into the room.

"This doesn't make sense," a medic said while their droid companion beeped a confirmation that the readings were correct.

"What is happening to my son? To my…husband?" Kya demanded.

"Ma'am, you shouldn't be in here," one of the nurses said, trying to usher Kya and Komilia out of the room.

"You will unhand me or you'll never touch anything again," Kya said, as a concealed lightsaber leapt into her hand and a brilliant blue blade ignited. "I am not leaving my family. Now tell me, what is happening?"

The nurse backed away as the lead medic approached. "We don't know. They're bouncing between life and death, for lack of a better description. They're not going to survive if this continues."

"Mom, look…the Opal!" Komilia said, pointing at the now hovering Opal, pulsing with light. Blue and red sparks twinkled with increasing speed and intensity as rays of light bathed over Kamjin. A beam of light arced out, blinding the room.

"Where did it go?" Komilia asked, recovering first and pointing to the empty space where the Opal had been. She didn't have long to ponder as the panels for the bacta tanks blinked green and began to drain the thick fluid. Komilia stared in wonder as her brother and father moved in unison, unhooking themselves from the life support systems.

"Get me a communicator line for Rohan immediately and get me out of here," Kamjin said between coughs.

"My Lord, transmissions haven't been getting through," a medic stammered.

"You will find that the disturbance is clear now," Kamjin said, as they rushed to free both him and Hikaru.

A short while later, Kamjin was wrapping himself in a white robe while Hikaru was being cradled by his mother, despite his protests. The shimmering image of Rohan stood at attention in front of his father.

"Yes, Kai is here and being attended to by the medics. He was only in the gateway for a moment before it spit him back out. The technicians are furiously going over what data they collected before the equipment was completely destroyed. They say they'll have it back operational within a week, but by the way Howie is lingering over them, I give them three days before he starts killing them as a means of motivation," Rohan said, smiling. "It's good to see you back on your feet."

"I feel," Kamjin paused, processing all that he felt. "Whole. As soon as the medics are finished with Kai, put him on a shuttle back here. I don't want him facing Darth Renatus's justice before I can try and smooth things over. Kamjin out."

Rohan nodded as his image dissolved. Kamjin turned back to face his family. His estranged wife stared at him while cradling their twelve year old son. Komilia stood slightly away from them, leaning against the wall. Kamjin and Kya both started to speak at the same time before she motioned for him to go first.

"Things have not turned out as I planned, nor as you hoped. I know you disagree with the path I have chosen to walk, but, with the fall of the New Republic and the corruption that ate it inside before the First Order struck, I hope you will find my Empire to be the safe haven you can live in and, perhaps in time, you will come to know me better."

Kya sighed. "I have always known you and I accepted you for you. What I could not accept is what you wanted for our children. But now, most of them are grown and making their own choices and…perhaps I can make a choice again…in time."

"I would like that," Kamjin said. "But before I can commit to you, I have seen a future that has me worried and I know of actions being taken now that must be changed to ensure it does

not come to be. As soon as Kai is back we will choose how we face this threat," Kamjin paused, looking around the room. "As a family."