A Crusader’s Reflections

**37 ABY**

**Dromund Kaas**

I sit in silence on the steps of the Dark Force Temple, my Force Cloak obscuring me from view. I have been training myself in its use these past months, and feel more adept with it here on Dromund Kaas than I ever have before. I allow myself a smile as I realise my hard work has paid its dividends. Around me Brotherhood troops sweep the area, ensuring there are no more One Sith insurgents in the area. A chilling breeze whips through the skies catching the rain and throwing it into eloquent patterns. I let myself become visible as I rise and climb the stone steps, pulling my cloak tight around me.

The obsidian walls of the Temple tower over me; as imposing as they are, the power radiating from them is almost giddying. In the courtyard, a company of troops stands sentinel, poised to defend our position to the last. I lower my hood as I cross the threshold into the Temple proper; releasing my grip on my cloak, it billows around my ankles as the wind howls into the vestibule. Off to the left, a room has been marked as off limits for a few hours; two guards bearing the mark of the Shadow Hand reveal the reason. I suspect the Emperor to be within, as well as Quaestors Rian Aslar and Liam Torun of Taldryan and Odan-Urr respectively. The Spiderlord is probably here to congratulate them on a job well done before dividing up the spoils of war.

In recent days, I have pondered the Council’s motives behind their Crusade. They claim it to have been a pre-emptive attack on an unrelenting enemy who would fight to assimilate us into their own culture and kill any dissenters. Yet the One Sith I have fought over the past year appear mostly indifferent towards us, simply doing what they must to survive against our hordes. Their hatred towards the forces of Odan-Urr however appears genuine, and for good reason: they oppose all that the Sith stand for. This leads me to wonder the true purpose behind the campaign. Could it really be as simple as physical gain? Or is the occupying of planets a means to an end? The relics we have uncovered across Sith space are surely only a fraction of the knowledge that could be found. If this is so, then are the Council searching for something specific? Millennia ago, the Sith were on the verge of conquering the galaxy, perhaps they seek the aid of the ancient Lords through holocrons to fulfil a much grander scheme than a Crusade. Perhaps the true motivations will never be known, left up to scholars to ponder over centuries from now.

My apprentice, Lucyeth approaches me, breaking my reverie. Dromund Kaas has been his first real test since he was brought into our ranks; he has handled himself admirably, but it is clear that he has much left to learn. He walks with me as I lead him to a makeshift armoury. There I retrieve a training saber before leading my apprentice on to as quiet a corner as can be found in the Temple with troops and scientist rushing through to conduct their business. Unclasping my rain-sodden cloak, I let it fall to the floor before kicking it away from me. I ignite the training saber before flourishing it; it feels strange in my hand when compared with my own lightsaber. Lucyeth ignites his own blade and I bid him show me what he has learnt of Banlanth thus far. I count out a rhythm for his blows as I twist my own weapon this way and that to intercept. 1 2 3 4. 1 2 3 4. 1 2 3 4...

My mind drifts to the beginning of the hostilities. I quickly realised on Nfolgai that my usual tactic of an all-out assault against any adversaries would be suicide against the upper echelons of the One Sith leadership. It took me months to unlearn all that I had been taught about combat, but come the invasion of Korriz, I had fashioned myself a new combat style. Requesting tutelage directly from the Combat Master, I was taught the arts of ghosting and becoming faceless, skills that would be essential if I was to have any chance of assassinating a One Sith Lord.

Twisting my blade ever so slightly, I parry Lucyeth's strike before countering with my own. To his credit, he jumps clear as I round on him launching my own assault. He brings his saber to bear as I test his defences. Once I am satisfied with his progress, I make a small motion with my free hand, lifting the discarded cloak from the ground before throwing it at my apprentice. It lands true, masking his sight and throwing him off balance. I raise the blade to point at his throat. Throwing the cloak to the floor, he makes to attack before realising he is 'defeated'. I inform him that he is now dead; he tells me I cheated. He has learnt an important lesson today: there are no rules in combat, there is only the victor and his victims. I tell him to meditate on what he has learnt before adding that he is progressing promisingly.

While my apprentice may be part of the future of the Brotherhood, I wonder what lies in my own future. I have heard whispers from my spies on Antei of Korriban. If the Council means to take the Sith capital, could this be an indication of their intent to launch another Sith Empire? These are indeed interesting times in which we live, where conspiracy lurks around every corner.